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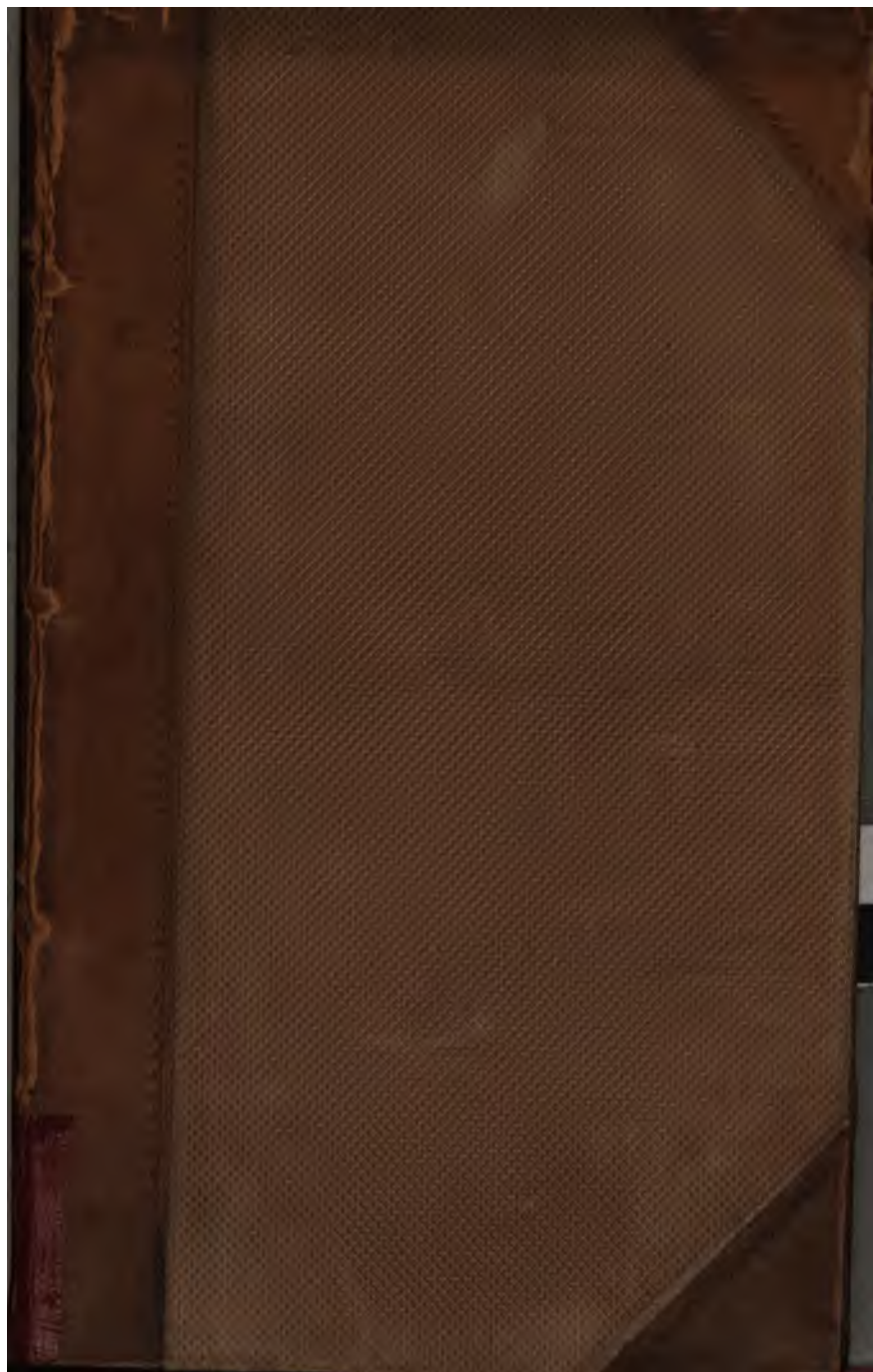
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THE
LIFE
OF
MR. THOMAS COOKE.





1



THOMAS COOKE.

THE
LIFE
OF
MR. THOMAS COOKE,
LATE OF PENTONVILLE.
(A MISER.)

“ Indignant Reader !
Think not his Life useless to Mankind !
Providence connived at his Designs,
To give to after Ages
A conspicuous Proof and Example,
Of how small Estimation is exorbitant Wealth
In the Sight of God,
By his bestowing it on the most unworthy
Of all Mortals ! ”



Arbuthnot's Epitaph on Col. Chatter.

BY W. CHAMBERLAINE.

THE THIRD EDITION,
WITH ADDITIONS.

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THE
LIFE
OF
MR. THOMAS COOKE.

BIOGRAPHY, perhaps, owes its origin to merit, and to gratitude. It is probable, that in the infancy of society, the affectionate remembrance of a series of benevolent or heroic actions first gave birth to a wish to perpetuate the events which distinguished the lives of the philanthropist or the warrior; and as science advanced, it suggested the idea of preserving their fame, not by a perishable monument of stone, but by recording them in history.

Friendship hence derived consolation from the conviction, that the glories of a splendid career would not terminate with the existence of him who had deserved well of his fellow-creatures; and national pride soon delighted to cherish those records which embalmed the memory of the departed hero. The rays, which emanated from the tomb of genius, were thus, as it were, received upon the page of the historian, and reflected to posterity.

The biography of those who had dazzled the eyes of their cotemporaries with their achievements, or ameliorated the condition of their fellow-citizens by their genius and worth, was found by experience to be of great utility to the rising generation. There were to

be seen the models of greatness, which the anxious parent could with ease point out to the emulation of his aspiring son ; and when *precept* failed in producing the wished-for effect, *example* often succeeded.

Immortality and merit were thus in some sort united by the labours of the historian ; while the worthless were consigned to the uninterrupted obscurity of the grave.

Time, however, manifested the propriety of preserving the remembrance of the bad, equally with that of the good ; as the former, it was conceived, though widely different from the latter, might be made subservient to the same end.

This idea, experience has proved to be correct ; for, the warnings furnished by the story of the one, have been found powerful auxiliaries to the example set by the other.

The actions of the good appear the more admirable, when contrasted with those of the bad ; and instead of their difference being marked by fame, or by oblivion, the choice left to mankind lies only between **EULOGIUM** and **EXECRATION**.

Taking for granted the truth of these premises, the Writer now presents to the public, the Life of a man, whose existence, through the long period of eighty-six years, was unmarked by one good action ; thus laying before the world a picture of selfishness and grovelling *vice*, in the hope that its *deformity* will excite the proper degree of *abhorrence*, which avarice, hypocrisy, low cunning, and meanness, going hand in hand, and uniting in one person, so justly call for.

To ascertain the birth-place of such as have signa-
lized themselves in the world by their military glory, or who have benefited mankind by their researches, their genius, or their public spirit, has been always considered an important duty of the biographer ; nations have contended for the honour of having given birth to Homer ; but, it is presumed, that were the place of nativity of *the personage* who is the subject of these Memoirs

enveloped in obscurity, the contention for the honour of possessing the birth-place of such a man as Mr. Thomas Cooke, would not be very great.

It does not even now appear to be exactly settled, what place had the honour of giving birth to this extraordinary man; for, while some fix the place of his nativity at St. Guise or St. Duist; (for there is a dispute about the orthography of this word) a small village near Norwich, others, who were well acquainted with the traditionary history of his life, as related by himself, say that he was born at Cleuer, near Windsor.

In fact, it is little matter where he was born.

According to his own report, being of the age of eighty-six when he died in 1811, the year of his nativity must have been somewhere about 1725 or 1726.

According to the best reports we have been able to collect, his father was an itinerant fidler, who used to pick up his shillings, sixpences, and even halfpence, at country fairs and wakes, and in alehouses, and wedding hops among the peasantry; after whose death, young Cooke being left destitute, was taken under protection by an aged grandmother, who brought him up until he was able to shift for himself.

The little education which he did receive, and which he considerably improved as he advanced in life, he acquired by his own industry, and at his own expence; we learn from the history of the early periods of his life, taken from his own narration, that he was, when a very young boy, sent by his parents, to earn his own bread; and that he was employed in a manufactory which gave occupation to a great many other boys, who, according to their work, were paid a certain stipend, out of which they were to find their own subsistence.

It was the custom with these boys to club a certain sum from their weekly earnings, for the purpose of establishing a mess, whereby they could maintain themselves at a smaller expence, than if each individual were to provide his own meals separately.

Young Cooke, however, was of a different opinion; to use his own words, he "understood trap" better than to spend his money so extravagantly. A penny loaf served him through the day, and of a halfpennyworth of apples he would make the most; when the rest of the boys therefore would go to their dinner, he would separate himself from them, and, retiring to the side of a brook, make his breakfast and dinner at one meal, upon the half of his penny loaf and one of his apples, and finish his repast by a draught of water from the running stream, taken up in the brim of his hat, which served him as a cup to drink out of.

Thus in his very first entrance into life were the first dawnings manifested of that parsimony, which through every stage of it he so anxiously cultivated; and were his savings, in his more advanced periods, applied to such good purposes as those which we now record, society perhaps might have reaped some advantage; and he had it in his power to have prevented its being on record, that he "lived unbeloved, and died unlamented." For, the money which he saved by his frugality in the arrangement of his *table*, he employed in paying one of the head boys of a small school, who acted as usher to a village schoolmaster, to instruct him, at leisure hours, in reading, writing, and the first rules of arithmetic.

About the time of his emerging from his boyhood, he had the good fortune to be received into the employ of a Mr. Postle, a gentleman of good character, resident in or near Norwich, who, in addition to the business of a dry-salter, carried on an extensive paper manufactory. In this gentleman's service he worked some time as a common porter. His activity and his habits of industry and sobriety attracted the notice of his employer, who, in process of time, raised his situation and his wages, and with Mr. Postle he worked some time as a journeyman paper-maker.

Mr. Postle was not one of those, who, in a hurry to amass an ample fortune, made use of fraudulent means

to obtain it: he was a man who was desirous of "rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,"—and, as he did not cheat the revenue, he sold his goods at such a fair price as he could afford; but this his integrity was the means of his being undersold in the market by those, who, not so scrupulous as himself, were enabled, by defrauding the excise, to sell their goods at a lower price, while they had a better profit on them.

Anecdotes of the frauds committed, the seizures made, and the penalties incurred, were frequently the theme of conversation among the excisemen whose duty it was to visit the concern in their official capacities: to these histories young Cooke gave an attentive ear: his active and inquisitive mind, ever directed to the "main chance," was constantly on the watch, how to turn every occurrence to his own advantage.

Collecting from his observations, that the revenue officers had much in their power, and that seizures and informations sometimes produced large sums to individuals, he conceived the idea of becoming exciseman; he communicated his wishes to his employer, who, he knew, would have no objection to promote his interest; to him he said—"Sir, you have it in your power to make me a gentleman at once; I want to be an exciseman, and if I can once get into the excise, I warrant I soon make my fortune; you, Sir, have interest with the city members and men in power; the obscurity of a country life ill suits my disposition, and I have an ardent wish to employ my talents in a field where I can display them to greater advantage: I want to visit the metropolis; give me your assistance in this business, and I will try my luck."

Mr. Postle readily complied with his request, and by his interest Cooke was appointed to a district in the neighbourhood of London; and having communicated to his parents and relations his wishes and intentions, obtained their concurrence to his departure. Not having money however to pay his passage up to town in a stage, and the distance being too far for a journey

lived in. He was appointed to inspect the excisable concerns of a large paper-mill and manufactory at Tottenham; here he found himself at home, being already well versed in some parts of the trade, from the insight to it which he acquired, while in the service of Mr. Postle. He was apprized too, that there were secrets in the trade, which he had not yet learnt; but which, having learned, he was determined to profit by.

During the time he was officially employed in this concern, the master of the paper-mills and manufactory, died. The widow, by the advice of her friends, determined to carry on the business with the assistance of the foreman.

Cooke, whose knowledge and insight into every part of the business, and the regularity with which he rendered his accounts to the board of excise, induced the commissioners to continue him in the same employ, was not an inattentive spectator of sundry infractions of the excise laws, which, either from inadvertance or design, were daily committed in the manufactory of paper, and of these he took a regular and most minute account.

When he had sufficiently informed himself of the value of the concern, the amount of the whole of the widow's property, and had calculated to how many thousand pounds the penalties incurred by frauds on the revenue would amount, he let not slip this golden opportunity of making his fortune by one grand effort. At a season favourable to his purpose, he took occasion to inform the widow, that in the carrying on of the business, from the time of the death of her husband, frauds had been committed against the excise laws, from day to day, the penalties on which, if levied, would amount to more than double the value of all her possessions; that as yet no one but himself had any cognizance of them; but, that, if once known to any other person in office, she had nothing to look forward to, but beggary and the Kings' Bench. She was perhaps to well acquainted with the truth of what

he advanced, to doubt any part of his statement. In this trying situation, she naturally asked him, what she should do, and begged him to stand her friend. Madam, said he, you have no alternative but by marrying me! How the lady took this proposition, made so suddenly, and most probably, so unexpectedly, we are not informed; but we may suppose, that after due consideration, she thought it the best way to make a virtue of necessity; and when it is considered, that Cooke was a man who had a great deal to say for himself, and was, besides, a man of comely countenance and good figure, she, seeing how much she was in his power, took no long time to deliberate between beggary and a handsome husband. She accordingly gave him as favourable an answer as he could wish; but as she suggested the marrying of Cooke so recently after the death of her first husband would be indecorous, Cooke, after taking care to secure her consent and promise as fast as wax and parchment could make them, agreed to a few weeks delay; and during this interval they carried on a pretty sort of courtship in private, at those hours when the rest of the family were gone to bed.

Cooke, on his marriage with this lady, became, of course, possessed of all her property, which was very large; and among the rest, of the mills at Tottenham, which were on lease to her former husband. On the expiration of the lease, he applied to the proprietor, (who it is believed was Alderman Townshend) for a renewal of the lease, but the alderman having previously been in treaty with another person, a Mr. Edward Wyburd, the premises were let to that gentleman, sorely to the disappointment of Mr. Cooke, who expressed much indignation at the preference given.

About this time, an advantageous offer fell in his way, of a large sugar concern in Puddle-dock; this was a business that he thought he knew something of and could very well manage; he accordingly closed with the offer, took the concern, and entered on the business of sugar making in the full hope of amassing his thou-

sands, and adding rapidly to his already very large fortune. Finding himself now master of the sugar-house, his avarice increased with his income ;

“ *Crescit amor nummi, quantum ipsa pecunia crescit.*”

Lest a customer or friend, to whom he had been obliged, should drop in at his dinner hour, he kept no table, but always dined, (if it can be called *dining*) away from his own house.

He had heard that the ancestor of a certain northern earl, no less remarkable for parsimony than himself, used to board himself at an expence not much exceeding a shilling a week. This man of rank and opulence was in the habit of taking his walk about one o'clock in the day, to an obscure part of the metropolis, where he thought he was not known ; and, having first provided himself with an halfpenny roll, (the halfpenny-rolls of those times were about double the size of the penny roll of the present day) he would descend into one of those cellars, then known by the appellation of “ Porridge Island,” call for a porringer of the usual fare of the place, *meat and broth*, the charge for which was *three halfpence*. The broth, into which he would crumble the soft part of his roll scooped out clean, served him for that day's dinner ; the meat he always took out of the porringer, and filling with it the inside hollow space left in his roll, he carefully wrapped the whole in his pocket handkerchief, and putting it in his pocket, this frugal *viaticum* served him for his next day's dinner,—the next pump, as with Mr. Cooke, supplying the cheap beverage to these *sumptuous meals*.

On this model Mr. Cooke formed himself, and often took pleasure in boasting how he used to disappoint friends and customers, who would occasionally come to take *pot-luck* with him. But with all his parsimony, Cooke, to his great astonishment, found that instead of making money by his sugar-house, he had lost at the

end of a twelve-month, five hundred pounds. That there are "*secrets in all trades*," he very well knew, but being only in the capacity of a porter before he undertook the management of the concern, he was satisfied that there were arcana in the trade,—certain mysteries with which he was unacquainted, and of which it was absolutely necessary he should obtain a knowledge. To discover what these secrets were, his ignorance of which, was the cause of his losing such a sum of money, was a matter of no small importance, but how to accomplish this, was the question. He invited several sugar-bakers to dine with him, and, after plying them with plenty of wine and other liquors, he, to use his own phrase, *sucked the brains* of some of the younger and more unguarded of the trade, by asking them, when in a state of intoxication, a number of questions suited to his designs, the answers to which he readily obtained; and thus he made himself master of as many of their secrets as answered his purpose to be acquainted with. His wife, ignorant of his intentions, and astonished at his being so unusually generous, expressed her apprehensions about the expence of the wine; "Do not," said he, "trouble yourself about the expence of the wine, I warrant I will *suck as much of the brains* of some of the fools that are coming to eat my victuals and drink my liquors, as will pay me for my wine, were it even claret or champagne."

But in his general way of keeping a table, it was far otherwise. A *pin** of beer was the largest quantity he ever brought into his house, and to this he had a lock-cock, the key of which he kept. This was for the indulgence of his wife, and because he found by experience that his servants would not drink water; for as for himself, water was his only beverage, at least, the only beverage he would afford to treat himself to, unless at the expence of others; but if his inclination ever led him to be desirous of a glass of good wine, he would

* A small cask containing four gallons and a half.

always find his way to the house of some of his tradesmen to whom he knew he was an important customer, taking care to make himself well acquainted with the usual family hour for dinner.

But it was not merely those that he had dealings with in the way of trade, that he would sponge on for a dinner. The meanness of his disposition, and the turpitude and cruelty of his mind, which were not to be exceeded by any thing but his inordinate love of money, carried him still farther, and spurred him on to find out new objects whereon to practice his deceptions, and gratify his malevolence at the expence of those on whose good offices he in a manner subsisted. For, not keeping a table at home, (as has been before observed) he gained the greater part of his daily food, by making visits to those on whom he had the art to impose; whose hopes he raised by making promises which it was never his intention to fulfil; and his greatest delight, next to the amassing of money, was his contemplation of the disappointments all would suffer, who contributed to his gratification and the supplying of his table, by presents which his entertainers would send him with unsparing hand, in the reasonable expectation of being remembered in his will;—reasonable, because his own solemn assurances led them to hope and expect that he meant to keep his word.

It was his practice, when he had marked out any one for his prey, to find his way by some means or other into the house, by pretending to fall down in the street in a fit, or ask permission to enter the house and sit down, in order to prevent its coming on. No humane person could well refuse admission to a man in apparent distress, of respectable appearance, whose well powdered wig and long ruffles, induced a belief that he was some decayed citizen who had seen better days. For assistance offered, or given, he always expressed his gratitude in a strong energetic manner, peculiar to himself. He would ask for a glass of water, but if wine was offered “no, he never drank any thing but

water." His kind host presses the wine on him, which for some time he resists; at last, seemingly overcome by the cordiality of the invitation, he consents; tasting the wine, he exclaims, "God bless my soul, sir, this is very excellent wine indeed! Pray, sir, who is your wine-merchant? For indeed, sir, to tell you a truth, it was the difficulty of getting good wine, that caused me to leave it off entirely, and take to drinking water." "Come, sir, another glass will do you no harm." "Not for the world, sir; I must be going. Thank you sir, a thousand times!" He however suffers himself to be prevailed on to take the second glass, and then takes his leave with a thousand thanks. So much for act the first.

The singularity of Mr. Cooke's appearance rendered him remarkable, and caused a desire in those, on whom he began to play his tricks, to know who he was; and being very generally known, it seldom happened that the enquirer was long at a loss to learn that his guest was "rich Mr. Cook, the sugar-baker, worth an hundred thousand pounds."

In the course of a few days, he makes his second visit, and takes care to come about dinner time. "My worthy friend, I could not pass your door, without making free to call in again to thank you for your great kindness the other day." "Pray, sir, do not mention it; I am heartily glad to see you. Pray walk into the parlour." "O sir, by no means; I just called to thank you. Sir, you saved my life. But I cannot come in; I will not intrude; Your family are at dinner. Well. Ah! God bless you and them!" "Sir, I cannot think of your staying in the passage (or shop, as the case may be.) You praised my wine the other day, I have a few bottles more of it, which you shall again taste; and as my family are just sitting down to dinner, I shall be glad if you will do as we do." "O no, sir, I humbly thank you, my gruel is waiting for me at home." Intreaties however prevail; this is just what the intruder wanted; he gets by this means introduction into the

family, and insures for himself a good dinner whenever he chuses to come. But this is not all; his views are directed still further. When he has made sure that the family know who he is, and the extent of his riches, he affects to take great notice of the children; "God bless these dear children! pray, madam, are all these fine children yours?" "Yes, sir," "And pray, madam, how many more of them have you?" "I have five in all; two at school, and these three that you see here." "Ay! ha! a sweet flock! God bless them, pretty dears! Pray, madam, will you have the goodness to give me all their names in writing?" After his departure, husband and wife congratulate each other on the pleasing prospect now before them: "what could be his meaning for asking all our children's names in writing?" "Why, what but to mention them in his will! You see, Kate, how a good action brings its own reward; this poor gentleman I did not know when he first was relieved by me, when he was near falling down in a fit at my door. We must cultivate his friendship."

And now pour in upon him, the geese, the turkies, roasting pigs, hares, pheasants, and every other acceptable present of this sort, and perhaps now and then, a dozen of the fine wine he praised so much.

This was the plan he pursued with perhaps not less than a score or two of different people, all of whom he duped; and so great was the quantity of poultry, game, vegetables, and provisions of every kind, which used to be sent to him, that it did not cost him in housekeeping, for himself and his domestics, more than fifteen pence or eighteen pence a day on an average, for many years back; but, it was considered as great extravagance indeed, when the expences of a single day arose so high as two shillings.

It might be supposed, that with the large quantities of game, poultry, vegetables, and other viands sent to this man as presents, he could very well afford to live well at home and give a good dinner to a friend at a cheap rate, once in a way; but no,—he had no notion

of giving a dinner to his most intimate friend, unless to get something out of him, worth double and treble the value of the dinner. What then did he do, the reader will say, with the immense quantity of presents of eatables daily pouring in upon him? Why, he just kept as much of the worst and least saleable, as would suffice for his own family, and sold the rest.

In the case of an ordinary bird, that he thought would not sell well, he would keep it; but as he was not fond of cold meat, he would quarter a goose or a lean turkey into four, and roast a joint every day while it lasted; this, and a dish of cabbage, formed the whole of each day's entertainment; for the drinkables, he himself drank only water, but as to the "gormandizing, gluttonous b——s of maids," as he called them, "nothing would serve them but table-beer and be d——d to them; they could not drink, not they, what their master did;" therefore he used to have, as has been already related, a *pin of beer* in at a time, which stood in a corner of his front parlour, with a lock-cock to it, of which he always kept the key; and from which he would regularly at dinner time, and before supper, draw exactly half a pint each woman, and no more.

As the word "to give" formed no part of his vocabulary, he had no notion of *giving* away to any, even those he liked best, the superfluity of his game; but rather than make presents to any one, he would keep hares, partridges, pheasants, &c. until they stunk; their feathers he preserved in a bag, to be sold; if a hare, he would carry it to a dog's meat seller, and haggle for half a sheep's head, or a pig's face, always reminding the buyer that the *skin* would fetch a groat.

He was once known to make a present, which was a hare, to Mr. Hollingsworth the surgeon. It is to be observed, that Cooke was a pest and a nuisance to every medical man from whom he thought he could smuggle advice; for he never paid for any, if he could by any means devise to obtain it gratuitously. When Mr. Hollingsworth had relinquished business, Cooke

selected him, because being no longer a medical practitioner, Cooke was well aware he could not with propriety make any charge for his advice; however, by way of remuneration for his frequent visits and tiresome histories of his ailments, Cooke one day brought him a present of a hare; but enquired of Mr. Hollingsworth very minutely on what day he intended to have it dressed, that he might call the next day for the *skin*.

A fine goose, a pair of prime fowls, a fat turkey, or a salmon, were a treat too delicate for him to feast on, unless at the table of another; therefore, when such were sent to him as presents, he used to trudge with them himself (for he was too suspicious to entrust a servant, lest that servant should not make as good a bargain, or might embezzle part of the purchase money) away then he would go to Leadenhall or Whitechapel market, and from stall to stall to haggle for the utmost penny, until he became the dread of all the butchers and poulterers in the place. If it should so happen (which was not often the case) that he had nothing in his larder at home, he would with part of the money obtained for his geese and turkeys, purchase a pig's face, a scrag of lean mutton, a pound or two of sticking of beef, or any stale black looking meat that he thought he could get a cheap bargain, and carry it home in his pocket, to serve for two days dinner; if it were a bony piece only fit for broth, he would have the broth himself; the meat, boiled until all nutrition was boiled out, was to serve for two days dinner to the maids. Whatever victuals he might have spoiling in the house, he would order to be cooked on Saturday, which was sure to be banyan day with the poor maids; "for," said he, "that there may be no waste, we always eat up the odds and ends of the week on that day, and for my own dinner, I take a mess of gruel."

The vegetables that were sent to him as presents, always stood him in good stead. When he had a quantity of potatoes in the house, he would allow no bread to be purchased; of cabbages he was particularly fond;

and as these are in summer to be had at small expence, he was seldom without them, either sent as presents, or bought at market.

After he had retired from business, and went to reside at a house in Winchester-place, Pentonville, he hit upon a notable expedient for supplying himself with his favourite vegetable, in high perfection, at a very easy charge. Annexed to the house in Winchester-place; and likewise to another house that he afterwards went to live in, No. 85, White-lion-street, Pentonville, was a spot of ground, which, when he first took the premises, was laid out prettily for the culture of flowers; but Mr. Cooke was a man who despised the foppery of flowers, and therefore lost no time in rooting them all up, for the purpose of making his flower-garden a cabbage-garden; he therefore dug the ground himself to avoid paying a labourer, and paying the tax for a gardener, and sowed cabbage seed all over it; in order to insure an early growth of his cabbages, he industriously applied himself to manuring the ground, for which purpose, he would sally out in moonlight nights with a little shovel and a basket, and shovel up the horsedung that had been dropped in the course of the day in the City-road, until he had loaded his basket; but as this did not afford him a constant supply, he used to avail himself of a different sort of manure, procurable, from a source nearer home; and has often been seen by the neighbours, whose windows looked into his garden, squatting over his cabbage-plants early in a morning, and manuring them in person, but without spade or shovel; and when the supply was scanty, he would take the half of a pennyworth of glauber's salts; thereby answering the double purpose of fertilizing his ground, and keeping the *primæ viæ* in good order. This economical management was so often repeated, and so often noticed, that it obtained for him the nickname of CABBAGE COOKE, which name he retained ever after.

Soon after Mr. Cooke had established himself in

the sugar-house, he was visited by a man of the name of Thomas Sidney. Sidney had been a playfellow and a favourite with Cooke, in his younger days, when he lived with his grandmother at Swannington, near Norwich, and had rendered Cooke many services; for, on account of many of his mean tricks, the latter had not the most comfortable life among his fellow-labourers and play mates; and Sidney, whose disposition in some points resembled his own, being a bigger boy and very stout and athletic, used to protect him from the insults and the impositions of the other boys. At a subsequent period of his life, Sidney came to London, and worked as a sawyer; and his wife kept a chandler's shop near the gardens at the back of the White Swan, in Hoxton. Here Sidney and his wife lived many years; and the man was frequently in the habit of calling on his old playfellow, who always received him with great apparent cordiality, and professed great friendship for him. To Sidney, as he did to many others, he made such protestations of his having named him in his will for something very handsome, that the poor man had good reason to expect, and certainly did expect, to receive a legacy that would make him comfortable for the remainder of his life; but, like many other expectants, to whom similar assurances were given, he was grievously disappointed.

For notwithstanding the very great professions of friendship which Mr. Cooke made to Sidney, his generosity never extended to far as to ask him and his wife to eat a bit of dinner with him, above once a year; while Cooke's visits to *his friend Sidney* were often made in the summer time on Sundays; "he no where," he said, "found himself so happy, as when he had it in his power to come out of the smoke of the city, enjoy the delightful air of the fields, which gave him an appetite for his dinner. Then, his luxury was to enjoy an after dinner mug of ale, and talk of old times with his *dear old friend!*" Poor Sidney and his wife always gave him the best they could afford, not only from a

real regard they had for the man, but they even went farther sometimes than was convenient to them, in order to provide him with something nice, from a principle of gratitude to a man, who never visited them, without being lavish in his assurances that they were largely remembered in his will.

In several years after, say about the year 1804, Sidney being grown old, and past his labour as a sawyer; and the profits of the little shop which his wife kept not being sufficient for their support, they were compelled to relinquish it. Mrs. Sidney took courage to wait on their old rich *friend*, not doubting, as he always professed so great a regard for her husband and for her, and often told them "they never should want, while he lived," that he would perhaps present her with five or ten pounds, on making known to him their distressed circumstances. "Oh, my dear Madam," said Mr. Cooke, "I am sorry, very sorry indeed, at your misfortunes; what a happy thing it is, that there is in this country, such institutions as parish-workhouses? your husband has paid scot and lot so long as a housekeeper in Hoxton, that it entitles him and you to a settlement; the churchwardens cannot refuse to take you in; my dear woman, go directly to your husband, never let him rest until he applies, and get both of you into a workhouse as fast as you can; that is the advice I would give you, even if you were my own sister. Here, here is a shilling for you; but lose no time; O, my dear woman, it is a good thing for poor people like you and your husband, that the aged and helpless can have shelter in workhouses!—Good morning!" Nothing depresses the spirits more than poverty: Mrs. Sidney was too much astonished at the proposal of the workhouse, to attend to his putting the shilling into her hand. At the end of his speech he had walked out of the house, leaving her almost in a state of insensibility.

In the winter of the same year, the inhabitants of the parish entered into a subscription, for the purchase of *coals*, to sell to the poor at a cheap rate. Each sub-

scriber was allowed to have a certain number of tickets to distribute, according to the extent of his benefaction ; and each ticket entitled the poor person to whom it was given, at the rate of a shilling per bushel. Mr. Cooke was one, who, being a subscriber of *half a guinea*, had a few tickets to deliver. The wife of his old friend called on him at this time, and again ventured to soften his obdurate heart by a recital of distresses that would have moved the feelings of any one, not steeled against every particle of pity and compassion ; he heard her tale, he expressed *in words*, his sorrow for her situation ; he gave her *a ticket*, and was liberal in praying God to bless her ; but he told her, she must find *the shilling* somewhere else!!!

Soon after, poor Sidney was obliged to go into a workhouse ; but was permitted to work for what he could earn, in the gardens of any people who would give him employment. In conversation with a friend who had known Sidney in his better days, and who was trying to get a few shillings from Cooke for his support ; Cooke observed, that Tom could not want money now : nay, he was in a situation to *SAVE* money now, as he could, and did earn, a shilling or eighteen pence a week, by working in the gardens of the parishioners.

Mr. Cooke's house-keeping, if house-keeping it can be called, being carried on in the frugal manner hitherto described ; it is not to be wondered at if his savings were immense. So, in fact they were ; and his time was principally divided between his sugar-house and the Bank. Thither he carried, daily, every shilling that was not employed in business, so that we may fairly conclude, that there was no moneyed man in England, whose visits were more frequent to the large stone house in Threadneedle-street, than Mr. Cooke's ; his daily errands thither, to buy into the three per cent. consols, made him known to all the clerks in the Bank ; and being of a respectable appearance, he was oftentimes invited to take a seat within the rails. This indulgence gave him an opportunity of knowing where

generously reward the hostler with a penny. Indeed his stoppages upon the road were not very frequent, and when he did stop, it was always with a view to economy. He generally when he went into the country, used to fill his pockets with cold meat from his own house, and fragments of stale bread; when, on the road, he felt himself hungry, or wished to rest his horse, he would alight at the door of a public house, deliver his horse to the hostler, with the caution before mentioned, and pulling out his broken victuals from his pocket, call for a pint of beer, and thus regale himself, to save the expence of going to an ordinary.

On his excursions, many were his expedients for feeding his horse. If he happened to fall in with a good honest farmer, or farmer's servant travelling the same way he was going, with a load of hay, he thought himself fortunate. Being a very well informed man, he could converse on almost any subject, and could accommodate himself to the taste of the person he conversed with; he would of course enter into chat with the driver of the hay-cart, on the weather, the price of hay and corn, and other topics of rural economy; thus having wormed himself into the good graces of his companion, he would carry on the conversation for miles; and while riding after the cart's tail, would suffer his horse to pull many a sweet mouthful, and take his belly full of the countryman's hay. At other times, when riding alone, he would frequently turn into byelanes; and if he saw the gate of a meadow or pasture field open, he would ride into the field, take the bridle off the horse, and let him take a full feed. If, in a very retired place, he ever found a gate locked, he made no scruple to lift it off the hinges to let his horse in, in order that he might have a belly full at any body's expence but his own. In one of his excursions he made free with another man's property in this manner; but some farmer's men that were watching him, and knew his character, made fast the gate, after he and his horse

had got into the field; secured both the gentleman and his horse, and in spite of his intreaties and *tears*, made him pay pretty handsomely for the trespass he had committed.

The Horse and the Onions.

A favourite horse of his had at one time, a disease in the eyes, for which Cooke wished to have a cure; but he was too avaricious to go to a veterinary surgeon, as he mortally hated to pay for any medical advice either for man or beast; instead therefore of applying for good advice, he listened to the quackery of some silly journeyman farrier, or more probably, some one who knowing his disposition, had a mind to banter him, who gave him the following, as a recipe for his horse's sore eyes. "You must take thirty onions; drill a hole in each, run a string through all, and hang the onions thus strung like a necklace, round the horse's neck, and let him wear it continually. As the onions hang on, they will draw the humour out of the horse's eyes into themselves; and by the time they are dried up and shrivelled, the eyes will get well; if not repeat the remedy: but mark this; when the onions become withered, they will be so full of the acrimonious humour, drawn from the horse's eyes, that they will be fit for neither man nor beast; therefore you must bury the onions where no hog can get at them." "Thirty onions, sir! why they would cost a great deal of money! pray, sir, would it not do just as well if I were to buy one very large onion, and cut it into thirty pieces, and string those thirty slices, and put them round the beast's neck?" "O no, sir, for they would wither in a day, and lose all efficacy: they must be *whole* onions." Cooke however could not find in his heart to part with so much money, as would purchase *thirty* onions; half the number he supposed would do as well; but although he was so foolishly credulous as to give ear to such

filly nonsense, his avarice would not allow him to believe in the deleterious quality of the onions. Wisely presuming therefore, that nothing ought to be thrown away; he took the onions when they were quite shrivelled, and he supposed that they had done their duty as an annulet round his horse's neck, for a fortnight, and throwing away the string, he put them into a hand-basket, and brought them into the house as if just returned from market, desiring his maids to make a dish of onion porridge of them for that day's dinner. The maids however, knowing well from whence they came, peremptorily refused to cook them; which refusal set the old gentleman to cursing and swearing, as usual, that he would not leave them a *farden* in his will;—a threat which did not much alarm them, as they pretty well knew, that to disappoint expectants was his greatest delight.

The Livery-stable keeper.

Cooke bargained with the keeper of a livery-stable to let his horse have the run of a field, to graze in, at so much per day. When he wanted to ride, he always took a very accurate account of the number of hours he had him out, and of the time of his outgoing and returning.

When he wanted to take away the horse finally, he desired the man to bring in his bill. On perusing it, he flew into a great passion, asking the man did he mean to be a robber, to plunder him and cheat him of his gold, &c. The stable keeper desired him to count the number of days, from the time the horse was first taken in to graze, until the day he was to be taken away, and he would find the bill very correct. "Horse taken in! no, sir it is *me* that you want to take in, and yourself that ought to be corrected, for wanting to cheat me of my gold! Had I not my horse out of your field, eight hours, on Thursday? Well, sir, and did I not ride him to Epsom next day, and had him out of your field eleven

hours : that is nineteen hours ; then, sir, five hours and a half on Saturday ; there, sir, there is two days and half an hour, that you wanted to cheat me out of ; in short, sir, here is an account of as many hours that my horse has been out of your field, as amounts to fifteen days!!! And have you the conscience, you cheating rogue, to expect me to pay for my horse's eating your grass when he has been miles and miles away from it!!!” “ Sir, I have not only the conscience to expect payment of my full bill, but shall make you pay a little more for calling me a cheat and a rogue.” Mr. Cooke who was afraid of nothing so much as law, very prudently thought fit to make an apology, so he paid the stable-keeper the full amount of his bill, glad to be secured from incurring farther expence.

The broken-kneed Horse.

During the life-time of his wife, and while he was engaged in the sugar-house business, Mr. Cooke's heart expanded a little, and he actually formed at one time, the determination of keeping *two* horses, and even a carriage! With this view he was for some time on the look-out for the purchase of a new horse, in addition to the one he already possessed. In these researches, it was his lot to fall into company with three or four gentlemen, among whom, one of them was bargaining with another for the sale of a horse ; the price was to be twenty guineas. Cooke, who knew very well the value of a good horse, examined the beast with great accuracy, and ventured to say to the owner of the horse, that if the gentleman who wished to purchase him, had bid his utmost price, he considered himself at liberty to offer more ; the parties agreeing to this, Cooke said he would give twenty-two guineas, provided the owner would allow him, as a trial, to take a ride for five or six miles, just to know his paces, and ascertain whether he would suit him ; promising to return at an appointed hour. Mr. Cooke

being well known to all the parties, this indulgence was readily granted. The hour of his promised return was expired; but no Cooke. After another hour of impatient expectation, Mr. Cooke returned, and the horse returned; but Oh! what a change in the poor horse! He was led in by his rider, limping, sweating through pain and anguish, the blood running in torrents down his fore-legs; and the skin and muscular parts of which, were lacerated, in a state shocking to behold. Cooke, who had always tears at his command, threw himself into a chair, and fell to lamenting his hard fate, that his dear friend Mr. ———— should meet with such a misfortune! after requesting a few minutes to indulge his grief, he related, that after having gone on so pleasantly, never having met with a more lovely creature, and one that would so well have suited him; unfortunately, in a narrow part of the road he got between a stage coach driving furiously, and a waggon going in the contrary direction. All his efforts to avoid injury to the horse were in vain; the wheels of both carriages came nearly in contact with each other, and the poor horse had his knees broken and lacerated, in this miserable manner, as you see. Nor did I, continued he, escape; (then shewing his worsted stocking, recently torn and dirtied, and a slight graze or excoriation on his own leg,) for I myself, said he, was near being killed, see my stocking and my poor leg! The poor horse, he would never hereafter be good for any thing, his day was done; the broken knees, even if they *could* be cured, would ever be a blemish and hurt the sale of him; for what stranger would buy a horse, that, from the appearance of broken knees, would be by every one suspected of being an habitual stumbler. But, alas! it was an accident; he was truly sorry for it; but nobody can help accidents; however, sir, said he to the owner, since I, most unfortunately, had your horse in my care at the time of the accident, I am willing that you shall *not* be a loser by him; nobody now would give five

pounds for him, but as I was the innocent cause of his misfortune I will give you fifteen. Whether matters would have been settled between Cooke and the owner amicably, is uncertain, but the gentleman that was bargaining for the horse when Cooke joined their company, and who had long known the horse to be a good one, after examining the injury that the horse had received, offered to stand to his original bargain, and to give the twenty guineas he had formerly offered, provided only the owner would in consideration of the expence of employing a farrier to cure the horses knees, throw him in a saddle and bridle into the bargain. This was agreed to on the part of the owner, and the horse under the care of a skilful farrier, was soon completely cured, and made as well as ever.

The gentleman who bought the horse, belonged to a club of respectable tradesmen who frequented the Three Tuns chop house, in Smithfield, and who in the summer season occasionally made an excursion to dine at a certain tavern, a few miles from town. He being one of the party, and coming rather late, the rest of the gentlemen, who were standing at the parlour window, noticed the horse, and observed that he did not appear the worse for the severe operation he had undergone some months back. This of course brought on an enquiry as to what they meant, and now the murder came out. It seems that Cooke on the day he had borrowed the horse for a trial, came to this very house, and alighting, led the horse to a farrier's shop near at hand. He there made a proposal to the farrier's man, (the master being from home) to cut and mangle the horse's knees, so as to make him bleed freely, and make it appear as if he had broken his knees by some bad accident, but to do it so as not to injure any of the tendons or do him any permanent mischief. To this act of cruelty the fellow at first objected, but upon Cooke's representing that there was a considerable bet depending on it, and saying that if he would not do it, he should easily find some one else that would, the

fellow thought he might as well earn the reward (two pots of beer) as another, and accordingly scored and lacerated the poor horse to the satisfaction of Mr. Cooke, and the disgust and horror of the bystanders, some of whom were the very men that were then assembled at the dinner party. In that condition the inhuman wretch rode the miserable animal to town, exulting in the hope that by this stratagem he should get the horse some pounds cheaper; but his knavery, cruelty, avarice, and lies, stood him in no stead on this occasion, and he was disappointed in the way we have already shewn.

In spite of his endeavours to amass his thousands upon thousands by the business of making sugar, he found defalcations which alarmed him, and was sensible that there were causes that he could not account for, which prevented his accumulating a large fortune so rapidly as he wished, and at first believed he should do. In this situation, he laid himself out to find out some gentleman skilful in the business, whose disposition might be so pliable, that he could easily persuade him to communicate secrets in the trade, that he was still a stranger to.

He had again recourse to treating; and as about this time he kept two horses, he occasionally lent one of them to some of his acquaintance, to take a morning's ride of a few miles, but never without himself as a companion. One of these gentlemen was candid enough to tell him, that if he had an hundred thousand pounds he might be ruined through his ignorance of the grand arcana of the business; as it was impossible for any man, not acquainted with certain most important processes, to proceed in it, without a certainty of absolute ruin. From this gentleman, Mr. Cooke from time to time, contrived to pump out some very useful information. The workmen about the sugar house were all Germans; they kept things too close; Mr. Cooke did not like, because his secrecy in

business defeated his projects : he laid himself out, to have a mixture of countries among his workmen ; for, though he did not understand Latin, he was no stranger to the maxim,

“ *Divide, et impera.*”

He therefore thought himself fortunate in obtaining a *boiler* who was a native of Ireland ;—this man was skilful, and industrious, but given a little to the pleasures of whiskey ; and when the potent beverage mounted to his brain, he was as communicative as his employer could wish. This was exactly the sort of man, that Mr. Cooke wanted ; this man, when properly primed used to tell him what the Germans studiously concealed from their employer, and of other points wherein they were negligent ; the Germans retaliated by stating to him in what points the Irishman was negligent or ignorant. By treating his *Irishman* on Saturday nights with a good supper and plenty of strong punch ; and by humouring the *Germans* in the way best calculated to conciliate *their* good will, he by degrees, wheedled out of both parties all that he wished to know.

He soon experienced the benefits resulting from the pains he had taken, and money flowed in apace. But notwithstanding he was enabled to accumulate riches so rapidly, by means comparatively honourable, I mean, by the carrying on the business of a sugar-baker, his inordinate thirst after money suffered him not to stick at any thing, however unwarrantable, whereby he could increase his store. Horace’s saying

“ *Rem, quocunque modo, rem*.*”

he never lost sight of for a moment ; and next to getting money, his greatest pride, his greatest pleasure, his

* “ My son, get money,—honestly if you can ; but, get money.”

highest boast, was to buoy up with false promises, to over-reach, and to disappoint, those who were foolish enough to place confidence in him!

A widow lady (whether she thought she would get more interest by putting her money in Mr. Cooke's hands, than by lodging in the Bank of England, or, for what other reason, we are not informed,) placed a sum considerably above an hundred pounds, as a loan, in the hands of this worthy gentleman. The half-year's interest on this money, he paid with the most scrupulous punctuality for some time.

The knowledge that this man had of the affairs of every one with whom he was in the smallest degree connected, was very wonderful: his information of the state of their finances was most accurate. From his deep penetration in these matters, it came to his knowledge, that the widow would at a certain time stand in need of the money of her's, that he held in his hands; and that of course she would call on him for the principal in no long time. This money he formed a scheme of making his own property, which but too well succeeded. At the expiration of one of the half-year's appointed for his paying the interest, Mr. Cooke waited on the lady; and, as usual, when he wanted to over-reach any one, was particularly civil. He deposited a bank note, in payment, which the lady observed was more than she was entitled to; Cooke saying that he had no smaller sum about him, nor any change in his pocket, the lady was going to ring the bell for the servant to go out for change, but Cooke prevented her, by saying, that she need not give herself that trouble, that it was no matter; it was only a few shillings more, which between friends would make no difference, as he could deduct the overpaid sum out of the next half-year's interest. Before the expiration of the next half-year the lady, as was foreseen, had occasion for her money, and made the regular demand of it to Mr. Cooke. He made no answer to several applications she made; *at last, finding by his shuffling her off from time to*

time, that he seemed determined not to pay her, she found herself obliged to have recourse to law for the recovery of the money lodged in Cooke's hands. This was the very thing Cooke wanted. He defended the action; swore to his having paid a certain sum of money, which the widow did not deny; but having no witness to prove in what manner it happened that she was prevailed on by Cooke to take more than her due, she was cast in the action, and had all the costs of suit to pay into the bargain, on the ground that she had taken USURLOUS INTEREST!!!

At what time his wife died, cannot be very well ascertained; those who were most intimate with him, being very much divided in their accounts; however, it is agreed on all hands, that he gave her daily and ample cause to repent her dear-bought bargain, and that he used her so ill that she died of a broken heart.

He paid his addresses to several different women after her death; but to none, except widows that were known to have comfortable jointures. There were two points however, which he insisted on, and from which he by no means would swerve; the one was, that the lady who should marry him, should make over the whole of her property to him, without the reserve of a single shilling; the other, that she should disinherit all her children, if any, by the former husband, whether male or female, and throw the whole of the property, as far as they might have it in their power, into his hands. None of the ladies to whom this amiable lover paid his addresses, seeming inclined to comply with these reasonable and humane proposals, *Cælebs* continued his "search for a wife" for the remainder of his days, without being able to find one.

An advantageous proposal being made to him, about the year 1783, by Sir Barnard Turner, he thought proper to relinquish the sugar-house concern which

he disposed of to that gentleman; and we afterwards find him concerned in the white-lead and vinegar manufactory, at Chelsea-bridge, which he purchased of a Mr Tibbs, of Holborn Bridge. This was a business that he did not very cordially buckle to; and he sold it again in no long time after he purchased it.

He did not immediately on quitting a life of active employment, retire to Pentonville, for it appears, that having lent a large sum of money, while he was in business, to an Irish nobleman, which he found he could not recover without going over to Ireland, he determined on taking the journey. While he was preparing for it, a very unpleasant interruption took place. No man was more severe in his censures on those who gave way to illicit pleasures, than Mr. Cooke, who always held himself out as a miracle of chastity; indeed so great was his aversion to bastard children, and the parents of them, that in one of his former wills, he ordained, that "before any of those distant relations to whom he bequeathed legacies, should receive any benefit; they were to take an overseer and one of the churchwardens of the parish in which they resided, and, accompanied by them, go before a magistrate and make oath that they never had a bastard child laid to their charge; and in his LAST will, he has provided that if either of his relations or residuary legatees should marry, or if any of them, male or female, should be guilty of incontinence, from which any illegitimate issue may arise, such party shall be wholly barred and excluded from any benefit under the will!

Mr. Cooke, however, gave proofs that he was not more exempt from the frailties of human nature, than other people; for, to his indescribable dismay, he received a visit from the parish officers of St. James, Clerkenwell, for the maintenance of a female child, which one of their parishioners had sworn to him. This was about the year, 1789. He at that time resided in Red-lion yard, behind St. Sepulchre's Church. Fortunately for himself, he being not then

so well known in the parish of Clerkenwell, as he was afterwards, the officers were strangers to his person, and to his means, otherwise they would not have let him off as cheaply as they did. He knew that his amours with the girl were too well known for him to attempt to deny the matter; but he represented himself as a poor unfortunate man, that had neither friends, nor a farthing of money in England; that he was preparing to go to Ireland, where he had a cabin and an acre or two of land, barely sufficient to keep life and soul together; there it was his intention to reside, and by dint of hard labour and the sweat of his brow, eke out the remainder of his days; that he had saved up by years of hard labour, twenty-five guineas, to carry him over, and that sum, *as he took God to witness!* was all he was worth in the world; and, that if they took from him the whole of that sum, and did not leave him as much as would bear his expences in travelling on foot to Chester, and paying his passage, he had nothing to look for, but to beg his way there as a common beggar, which he humbly hoped the gentlemen would have compassion on him and not force him to.

Having plenty of tears at command on all occasions, he was not sparing of them; until at last the parish officers by dint of his protestations, intreaties, and agony of grief, were induced to lower their demands, and consent to take eighteen guineas from him: which were paid into the hands of Mr. John Shallis of Vineyard Gardens, Clerkenwell: having taken a receipt in full of all demands for that sum, the old man marched off, chuckling at the deceit he had practised on the officers. But this money did not exonerate the parish for the expence of maintaining the girl, at 3s. 6d. per week, until she was past the age of seven years. What became of her afterwards, might probably be yet learned by an examination of the parish books; but it is not worth while.

Having accomplished this weighty business, much to his own satisfaction, but not so much to his mind;

as if he could have left *the whole burthen* of maintaining the child, to fall upon the mother or any body else, no matter who, so as he might himself escape scot free, and without making any allowance at all, he set off for Ireland.

The business that brought him to that country, being the recovery of a large sum of money, which he had accommodated a nobleman with some years before, it may well be supposed such a man as Mr. Cooke would not relinquish his pursuit until his object was attained; by perseverance and closely besieging morning, noon, and night, daily the doors of this nobleman, he at last gained his point; and having secured the bulk of the sum recovered, by remittances to his banker in London, he afforded himself as much loose cash as might be sufficient for pocket money in a trip to France, which he was prevailed on to take at the instance of some Irish gentlemen who were setting off, and who represented to him at how small an expence the trip might be undertaken, and how cheaply all the necessities of life might be obtained in that kingdom.

Notwithstanding this man's inordinate greediness after money, he always had a hankering after public places of amusement, and the pleasures of travelling, when he could enjoy them at the expence of other people; but it is not very clear, that the old gentleman would have suffered these representations of the cheapness of provisions, and of travelling in France, to have any influence on his mind, were it not, that he had the offer of having his expences borne by one of the many whom he contrived to dupe, by those arts which he too successfully practised to gain the entire confidence of those, whom, to suit his own purposes, he would feed with the strongest assurances of making them heirs to his immense property.

With one of these he embarked for France, and while his entertainer was contemplating the pleasures he was bestowing on his fellow traveller, and counting over in idea the thousands he calculated on receiving

after the old man's death, Cooke enjoyed at free cost the pleasures of Paris; but none of these pleasures gave him half so much delight, as the laugh he had at the folly of the credulous legacy-hunter, who set no bounds to his generosity in treating the ungrateful and insidious reptile who thus lived on him.

What space of time might have been occupied in those emigrations to Ireland and France we are not informed. He set off so privately from London, that none of his acquaintance knew whither he was gone; and after he had been missing some time, those who expected to be gainers by his death, set on foot an enquiry to learn whether he was living or dead; those who took the trouble to enquire at his bankers were soon put out of suspence, by being informed, that he was alive and well, and would soon make his appearance again in London.

On his return from the continent, being detached from the fatigues of a life of business, he determined on taking a house a little way out of town, but not at so great a distance as to prevent him from taking his daily walk to Smithfield and the Bank. Accordingly he pitched on Pentonville for his residence, and until he could suit himself with a house, he resided for some time at the Angel Inn, at Islington, from whence he afterwards removed into a small house he had taken in Winchester-place, Pentonville.

His secession from the more active scenes of life, and retirement from business, gave him more leisure than ever he had before, to practice those arts of deception by which he sought daily and hourly to save his money, and add to his already accumulated and enormous stock of wealth. With this view, he insinuated himself in the manner alluded to in a former part of this memoir, into the acquaintance and good graces of people who were entirely strangers to him; and, after an intimacy had taken place, insured himself a good dinner whenever he thought proper to call on them, by his declarations, that they and their children,

(if they happened to have any) were named in his will as his principal legatees; and not only thus did he cater for his dinner abroad, but had the expences of his housekeeping at home greatly diminished, by the number of presents of hares, wild fowl, geese, turkies, poultry, hams, and almost every other kind of provision, supplied by those who were duped by him into a belief that they were to come in for the bulk of his fortune after his decease.

One gentleman in particular he laid very close siege to, and at length succeeded in completely deceiving him. This gentleman enjoyed a very comfortable situation under government, and lived in a genteel style; Cooke set his mind on levying contributions on him, and introduced himself to him, by a fabricated tale, that after very particular enquiry, he had found out that he was the nearest relation he had in the world; that he himself had amassed a very large fortune, and as he was verging into the decline of life, he had been at a loss how he should dispose of his money by will, for want of having relations to leave it to; that he was very happy he had found such a man as him, on whom to bestow it, and solicited a nearer acquaintance with him. The gentleman, although not covetous of any man's possessions, yet for his family's sake deeming it not prudent altogether to decline the friendship and apparently kind offers of such a man, cultivated his acquaintance, and made him a welcome guest at his table. As he resided a little way out of town, Cooke did all he could to persuade him to keep his chariot, telling him that he would leave him at his death ample provision to keep two; this step however the gentleman prudently declined taking, observing, that walking to and from town kept him in health, and that when he was disposed to ride, there were plenty of stages at all hours of the day, that could set him down at his own door.

With this gentleman Cooke played his usual game, *of desiring the children's games and ages to be given*

to him in writing. Indeed he went so far as to make a will, on purpose to shew Mr. C ——— that he had left him and his children the bulk of his property ; but this was no new thing to old Cooke, who has been known to make many sham wills for the purpose of gulling those whom he had a design upon. Being in the habit of altering his wills continually, and sometimes having new wills made almost every month, he could easily impose on those, who, according to his own opinion, would require more than mere *verbal* assurances of his good intentions towards them, by putting one of those sham wills in his pocket, and shewing the parties their names properly set forth as legatees, with a good fat thousand or two, or more, as would best suit his purpose. The gentleman of whom we have just made mention, was thus set down, as heir, executor, and residuary legatee; in gratitude for this, his presents to the old man were frequent and valuable. Among other things, he regularly sent him, twice a year, two dozen of the best port wine that could be procured.

This gentleman, however, did not injure himself by the numerous presents which he bestowed on Cooke; for, though he had a wife and several children, he had a property of his own, and a lucrative office under government, to enable him to support these expences, which for the sake of his children, who were all remembered in the will, he thought himself well warranted to go into. Mr. Cooke, however, served him as he served more than forty others, and never even mentioned his name in his last will and testament, not even so much as for a *ring*.

But it was not so with many other individuals on whom Mr. Cooke had the art to impose; for there were several who could very ill afford to make presents to him, but who submitted to privations, that this old man might feast; in the hope that they or their children might be the better for it, relying on his assurances to that effect.

A distant relation of his, who lived in the country, was in the habit of sending him bacon, fowls, &c. This man once brought him an earthen pan of butter, telling him he came to dine with him. Cooke excused himself, saying there was nothing in the house but a cold blade-bone of mutton, not enough for himself and the two maids; and to turn the discourse, he asked how many pounds of butter the pan might hold. The man answered, ten or twelve pounds. Poh! said Cooke, what signifies sending me such dribblets, I will send you an empty firkin at once, and you can fill it for me. The poor man made answer, that it was more than he could afford at one time. "Why, what a mean-spirited dirty scoundrel you must be," said Cooke, "you that are to have so many thousands upon thousands at my decease, to grumble at sending me a firkin of butter! Well, sir, you will do as you please, and I will do as I please." The poor man was terrified by this implied threat; sent the firkin of butter and a fine turkey in a few days afterwards; both which Cooke sold to a neighbouring cheesemonger,—but never remembered the donor in his will.

One gentleman, whom Cooke had absolutely made a property of, and was never easy without the society of him, or his wife, whom he frequently sent for to sit and chat with him for hours, to the neglect of her own family affairs, was so sure of being set down for five thousand pounds, or at the very least; three thousand, from the positive promises and assurances of Cooke, that he went to the expence of a complete suit of new mourning, and put a crape into his hat when Cooke died, and would not believe that he was *not* remembered in the will, until he went and had a sight of it at Doctors Commons.

A paper-maker of the name of King, who had been an apprentice in the same manufactory in which Mr. Cooke worked in the younger part of his life, was in habits of intimacy with Cooke, and actually went so

far in making him presents, and entertaining him, and driving him in gigs to fairs and races, and watering-places, relying on Cooke's professions that he should never want while he lived, and should be a rich man at his death, that the credulous man at last ruined himself, and became a bankrupt.

The goodness of this man's character procured him many friends: this circumstance Cooke well knew; so that when Mr. King applied to him for assistance in his distress, he contrived to give him some plausible reason for delaying his intended benefaction until he should have tried all his other friends; "and after you have obtained all you can get from all the rest of your friends, come to me." Mr. King took his advice, and shortly after waited on him with a list of benefactions, which he had received from the trade, together with the names of the subscribers. "Now, sir," said he, "I have taken your counsel, in making you the last of my friends whom I call upon; and, as you always said you would do something handsome for me, now is the time for you to shew your friendship, and give me your assistance. I have now, sir, collected from my other friends, to the amount specified in this list of subscribers, and, however small your donation may be, still it will increase the sum, and I shall be thankful for whatever you may give." "How much have you got?" said Cooke; King answered, "about two hundred pounds;" "Two hundred pounds, sir?" exclaimed Cooke, "why, sir, you ought never to want money again as long as you live! two hundred pounds, sir! why it is a fortune! an immense sum! you cannot want any more money, with so large a sum in your possession; but, sir, I will give you a piece of advice, that will be worth double the money; and that is, *if ever you buy a pint of beer again, as long as you have existence, you ought to be DAMNED!* There are plenty of pumps, and I will give you nothing."

From what has been related, the reader will readily conclude, that Mr. Cooke was not a man who very

obstinately refused an invitation to a good dinner ; it was a part of the system he laid down for his own governance, to court by flattery and promises, as many invitations as he could ; and, notwithstanding his professions of temperance, and his praise of water-drinking, he had no objection to a few glasses of good wine, when they cost him nothing ; and as to the eating part of the business, he would gormandize and tuck down the greatest part of a goose or a turkey, or any thing else that he had a liking for, with most unremitting perseverance ; for it was a common saying with him, and he acted up to it, that it was not worth any man's while to go to a feast, if he could not eat enough at it, to serve him for two days subsistence afterwards, without any other eatables or drinkables, except water. It is in the memory of some of his acquaintance, that when he once went to Norwich, and dined at the house of a Mr. Gough, he did not spend a shilling for two days afterwards ; but this is only one instance out of a great many which might be recorded of his two-day fastings after cramming himself at a feast.

It has already been noticed, that Mr. Cooke was fond of keeping a horse, and notwithstanding his extreme parsimony in other respects, he always took care that the horse he possessed should be a good one. During the time he lived in Winchester-place, he began to think that he could maintain his horse much cheaper by having him at home, than by keeping him at a livery-stable. For this purpose, he actually converted the kitchen of his house in Winchester-place into a stable, and used to curry, and fodder, and do all the necessities about his horse with his own hands, to save the expence of hiring a stable-boy. Besides, in this saving plan, he had the dung too for his cabbages, which was no small advantage.

As he had the horse, he thought it would be no very great expence to keep a chaise for this horse to draw, and he actually did at one time relax so far from his rigid system of œconomy, as to resolve on keeping one. Accordingly, he bargained with a coach-maker, and

the chaise was sent home, with harness, and every thing complete. Mr. Cooke, however, in ordering home the chaise, seemed for once to have forgotten his prudent foresight, and to have neglected to weigh all the expences attending the keeping this vehicle. He had no chaise-house to put it in, to preserve it from the weather. He saw, that although he might be able to dress his horse, the keeping the chaise and horse too, clean and in order, would be too much for him; he even forgot the tax that he would have to pay for his carriage; and he found that he could not do without a man-servant to take care of his horse and chaise. Therefore, until he could hire this man-servant, he could not run his chaise. How he was to dispose of it in the mean time, he had not thought of. To keep it in the open area before the house would not do. It might be stolen at night, or injured; and the rain would render it unfit for use; and the doors were not wide enough to admit of its being run through the house, into the back part. How then was he to manage? Why, he had the wheels taken off, and put in the back garden, and the body was then carried through the house into the back yard, and lifted up through the back window into his bed chamber. However, that he did not entirely give up the idea of running his chaise, was evident from his attempts to hire a man-servant.

On making known that he wanted one, he had several applications; but one man was too slight to do the work, another too old; one he rejected, because he was a thin, lathy-shanked, fellow, with a wide mouth, that he was sure would eat too much; another, because he owned he could not do without a little drop of gin once a week. But there were two grand objections to all that offered; namely, that they all declared they expected to have a sufficiency of victuals; the other, the rogues, without exception, asked a great deal more wages than he was inclined to give; and therefore he was determined to keep the chaise and wheels where

they were, until he could find some more reasonable attendant. Now as it was not probable that such a one as would answer Mr. Cooke's expectations, would offer; and in fact none *did* offer, the chaise-body stood in his bed-chamber, and the wheels lay against the wall in his garden, for years after years, until they were quite rotten; and the wheels especially, that had been exposed to all variations and inclemencies of the weather, overgrown with grass and weeds. In this state, he took it into his head to try to sell them, and among other customers whom he wished to attract, he offered them to a gentleman that was afterwards his executor, telling him he expected a good price for the vehicle, as it had never been used, but once, namely, from the maker's house to his own, and of course not a bit the worse for wear and tear.

It will doubtless be admitted, that such a man as Mr. Cooke was not likely to be a very improving tenant, to any house. During the whole time he lived in Winchester-place, which is supposed to have been from twelve to fourteen or fifteen years, he never once painted the house, inside or outside. The landlord of the house, we may be assured, was not very well satisfied with this neglect; and finding all remonstrances were vain, he was desirous of doing some repairs at his own expence; but Cooke would not suffer the workmen to come into the house. When the landlord found that he could obtain no good of Mr. Cooke, he gave him legal warning to quit. Of this warning, the old man took no notice. When the time was nearly expired, at which, agreeably to notice, the landlord expected Mr. Cooke to quit his house, he waited on Mr. Cooke, to enquire if he had provided himself with another dwelling, telling him at the same time, that he expected to have the house given up at the appointed time. Upon this, Mr. Cooke called up that sort of artillery to his aid, which he had always at command, and with abundance of tears and lamentations, intreated for the love of God that Mr. ——— would not be so

cruel as to turn him out; that he had been looking for a house, but had not yet been so fortunate as to meet with one that would suit him; and begged hard for another month to look out. This was granted. A similar application made at the end of the month, obtained the indulgence of another month. The landlord now determined to be peremptory, and wrote him word, that he should certainly call on such a day, at a certain hour, at which time he should expect Mr. Cooke, without farther delay, to give up the possession of the house.

Mr. Cooke, who well knew that possession and denial were eleven points of the law; but that in all cases in which law was to be had recourse to, the being in possession of good and sufficient evidence, or the want of it, was of still greater importance, took care to appoint one of those people, whom he held in subserviency by his usual policy of promising to remember him handsomely in his will, to be in attendance at his house exactly at the hour at which he expected the landlord to call on him. On the arrival of this latter personage, Mr. Cooke feigned himself very ill: "very ill indeed, sir, my friend here knows I have not been able to stir out these three weeks, I have been so ill."

Land. "Well, sir, I hope you have suited yourself, as really the house will tumble down, and bury you in the ruins, it is so much out of repair; and as you will not repair it, I must absolutely have the key."

Cooke now played off the artillery he had reserved in his *lacrymal sacs*, and, as his tears flowed in torrents, he exclaimed, "miserable man that I am! which way shall I turn me! can you have the heart to turn a poor old man at my time of life into the street! O dear! what will become of me! I am not able! I am not able to look out, and I have no friend to look out for me; I wish the house would fall on me, and put me out of my misery! Spare me! spare me for God's sake! and upon my honour I will, as soon as ever I can, try to provide myself; but don't turn a poor old man out to

himself rather too far, in the words of comfort which he spoke, yet he did not intend to carry those words to the full extent of their meaning, and to permit him to reside in his house in perpetuity: he made many friendly visits, urging Cooke to quit the house, but Cooke was immovable. At last, after ineffectual efforts by fair means, and after being kept out of the house until his patience was quite worn out, he brought an ejectment against the tenant. Cooke suffered this to be brought into court; and, upon the trial, he brought forward the man whom he had secured as evidence; who swore that the plaintiff, in his presence, on a certain day and hour, *did actually promise* that he would not turn Mr. Cooke out, *but wait until the latter should find it convenient to suit himself with another house*; on this evidence the landlord was non-suited, and Cooke had the satisfaction of returning home in triumph, and of recounting for many days, the victory of villainy and ingratitude over good nature, to all who would listen to him. The landlord, however, brought his action, *de novo*; and likewise another action for the amount of thirty pounds, for dilapidations, such as turning the kitchen into a stable, and other matters; in both of which he succeeded, after being kept out of his house for full two years or more, by the artifices and obstinacy of his refractory tenant. Mr. Cooke, who very well foresaw that he should not be able to stand his ground against his landlord, in this second contest, was prudent enough to take timely measures to secure a retreat; accordingly, before the day arrived, on which the ejectment was to have been put in force against him, he had removed his furniture, and his domestics, to the house, No. 85, White-lion street, Pentonville, in which he afterwards resided to the time of his death.

While he had his health, and his eye-sight, he did not suffer his horse to eat hay in idleness, but rode him about to fairs, horse-races, and watering-places. From the irregularity of his diet, however, at one time gormandizing as much at a single meal, as ought to suf-

fice for two or three days, and perhaps on the three or four following days, starving himself and his household, on two or three bones of a *green* loin of mutton, and drinking nothing but cold water, he fell into habits of indigestion, and flatulency: and the gradual loss, or rather deterioration of his eye-sight, added to the loss of his health, obliged him to part, although with very great reluctance, with his horse, which he sold, in good order, for more than it cost him.

After he had disposed of his horse, he used a great deal of exercise on foot, and on fine days, he was seldom to be found at home.

For the first year or two he used to walk about without the assistance of a servant, but having once or twice been seized with a fit in the street, and his eye-sight also growing defective, he hired an elderly woman to lead him about the streets.

His uncouth appearance, and the singularity of his dress, caused him to be well known about Pentonville and the Bank, and created a desire in those who did not know him, to enquire who and what he was.

A large willow or straw hat, with a very broad brim, was the external covering of his head; and a well powdered wig, with large curls and a long tail, gave him an air of respectability; over this wig, in cold and wet weather, he used to wear a large white cambric handkerchief, which was tied under his chin, and occasionally another round his neck; most commonly, but not always, he wore a silk shade, that was once green, over his eyes, but so long in use, and so greasy, that black disputed the predominancy of its colour with the green; whether to keep out the rays of light, or to deceive the beholders into a belief that his eyes were worse than they really were, is not certain; but most certain it is, that though he affected to be wholly blind, no man could see to fill a bumper of good wine to the, very ~~brim~~ without spilling a drop, or see who and what was doing about him, when it suited his purpose to make *use of his eyes*, better than Mr. Cooke.

A threadbare black coat, darned and patched in many places, a waistcoat and breeches corresponding with the coat in antiquity and patches, were his usual habiliments; but when he went to dine with his banker, or any other person he had a respect for, or went to church on Sundays, he had a bettermost black coat; but he never went abroad, summer or winter, without his blue sur-tout, which, in the course of time, was so darned, patched, pieced, and quilted, that at last not above half the original cloth remained. His shirts, (of which he did not keep a very large stock) were of the coarsest linen, except at the wrists and neck; but he never went without long ruffles, which, he said, made a man look more like a gentleman than any other part of his dress. He has left by will a diamond ring to a Mrs. Gillingham; but the ring that he used to wear in common was only a piece of looking glass set in ordinary gold.

His stockings, which were always of the coarsest yarn, were of different colours; and so covered with darns in all parts, that scarcely a thread of the original stocking remained.

The old gentleman was always very particularly careful to keep his feet warm and dry, and therefore his shoes (if shoes they could be called, which more resembled a pair of Irish brogues, or still more nearly, the shoes with wooden soles that grooms and stable-men wear, when about wet work) were made of the strongest and thickest leather, and blacked with ink, which he obtained in large quantities *by begging*, from public-offices, or the counting-houses of any of his acquaintance that would give it to him; and these shoes were buckled on with a pair of tiny silver buckles fashioned in the reign of Queen Anne. In this garb, supported on one side by his old woman, whom he hired to go about the streets with him, and on the other side, by a hooked crutch, that for thickness and strength might vie with the famous oaken cudgel of Dr. Johnson, he was in the habit of sallying forth to make his daily visits to purchase stock at the bank, or skewl for a dinner among some of those, whose hopes of their in-

beriting his thousands, he raised for the twofold purpose of gaining a good dinner free of expence, and enjoying in idea their disappointment of a handsome legacy after his death *.

Towards his latter days, he would sometimes open his heart to treat himself with a ride to the bank in the Pentouville stage; but it must be very bad weather indeed, and torrents of rain pouring down, when he could bring himself to be so extravagant. On such occasions, however, he did not admit his old lady to the honours of the sitting, but ordered her to trudge on foot, and meet him in the city at an appointed place.

In one of those stage-coach peregrinations, Mr. Cooke happened to fall in conversation with a gentleman, one of the passengers, whom, from what had dropped from him, he discovered to be a trustee, and an active supporter of some public charity.

Cooke could not resist this opportunity of making an impression on the rest of the passengers, by informing the gentleman, that he was a man that had some property, and had neither "*chick nor child to leave it to;*" and that he was never more thankful than when he could meet with gentlemen who would put him in a way of bestowing part of the little wealth the Almighty had blessed him with, in devoting the superfluity of it to charitable purposes.

His fellow-traveller, overjoyed to find a gentleman so ready to part with his money, spoke at some length in recommendation of the charitable institution he wished to turn his attention to; and, in the warmth of his heart, invited him to dine with him on the following

* My good friend, Mr. Sherwood, having represented to me that a work of this kind always goes off the better for having some sort of engraved frontispiece, I was happy in having it in my power to make a drawing of the old gentleman, in the costume which I have just now been describing, leaning upon the arm of his old woman, as he trudged along to the bank to buy stock; and Mr. Greigg, the engraver, has been fortunate in hitting off a tolerably good likeness of his face; I say fortunate, because both the drawing and the engraving were done from remembrance only, and not until some months after the old man's death.



day, "when," said he, "I will explain matters still more at large." The gentleman gave his address, and they shook hands at parting, both mutually well satisfied with each other.

Mr. Cooke did not fail to accept the invitation, and away he sallied forth the next day, leaning on the arm of his female conductor, into the city; but as his modesty, or rather his pride, would not permit him to put his woman in the way of getting her dinner at the house of his newly-found friend, he gave her a shilling, bidding her, as soon as she should have left him at the gentleman's house where he was to dine, to go to some eating-house in the neighbourhood, and get a "mouthful of victuals," but by no means to spend the whole shilling, and to be sure to bring him back the change, and call for him at a certain hour.

The gentleman received him with courtesy, entertained him with true hospitality, and at last, after a few glasses after dinner, he ventured to resume the subject of the charitable institution, which he wished to befriend.

To his exhortation Mr. Cooke made no other reply than a vacant stare, and "*Sirr*," emphatically pronounced.

His entertainer proceeded to explain. Cooke assured him, he must be mistaken in the man. "*Sirr*, you never said a word about this to me in all your life. It must have been to somebody else you said all this. I know nothing about it, *Sirr*; and I never made you any promise, nor have I any money to give. I have nothing but what I work hard for, and that is little enough to support me. My time is expired, *Sir*, and if my servant is in the way, I shall wish you a good evening."

Thus, after having, as usual, crammed himself with as much good cheer as would enable him to keep fast for the next day, according to his usual custom, he moved off, his maid being waiting to attend him.

The first question he asked her was, what change she had to give him out of the money he gave her to buy her dinner. The woman answered candidly, that the gentleman was so kind as to order his servants to take her down to his kitchen, where she had a good dinner with the servants of the house; adding, "such a dinner as my poor stomach has been a stranger to for many a long day!"—"O then," said Cooke, "give me back my money;"—and actually took the shilling from the poor woman, and put it in his pocket.

Disease, and the infirmities of age, creeping on by slow degrees, he found himself reduced to the necessity of applying from time to time, for medical advice. But not finding such instantaneous relief from the prescriptions of those physicians whom he consulted, as he expected to receive, he ran the gauntlet from one doctor to another, until he tired them all. Many are the anecdotes which might be related, of the tricks which this avaricious old man used to play, to cheat medical men of their time, and save his money. He would make no scruple to beg from some of his acquaintance, whom he knew to be subscribers, a letter for a dispensary, and clothing himself in his own old ragged and cast-off apparel, would attend regularly, as a pauper, among others, to receive advice and medicines gratuitously; and this for several successive weeks. At length, however, his real circumstances being made known to the medical gentlemen, by some of the patients, or by other means, he has been dismissed, in a way not much to his credit; and this has happened to him more than once.

At one time he obtained a recommendation as a patient to the dispensary for the diseases of the eye and ear, in Charterhouse square. The natural goodness and suavity of Mr. Saunderson's disposition, induced him to pay every attention to Mr. Cooke, who passed himself upon him as a reduced tradesman who had seen

better days ; but finding that this old man would not be satisfied, without engrossing a great deal more of his time than he could well spare, he was at last induced to make some enquiry concerning his patient ; and at length learning who he was, he read him a very serious lecture on the meanness and impropriety of his conduct, in thus obtaining gratuitously that which was only intended for the necessitous ; and acquainted him, that if he expected his future services, he must give a fee, as was usual with other gentlemen. " Very well," said old Cooke, " I am willing to pay any thing in reason ; but mark this, I expect to be cured first, for I always go upon the maxim of " NO CURE NO PAY." Mr. Saunders rang the bell, desired the servant to call in the next patient in rotation, and politely wishing Mr. Cooke a good morning, desired the servant to " open the street door for the gentleman."

Another time, he became so excessively troublesome to a physician to whom he had paid about four or five half guineas, that the doctor at last told him, he had tried every remedy and exerted all his skill, and could render him no farther service. " Then give me back my gold, sir," said Cooke, " why did you rob me of my gold, unless you meant to cure me?" The Doctor, whose chariot was waiting at the door for him, left the old man to vent his spleen in the study, to the no small diversion of the servants, and gave orders that he never should be admitted again.

This old man would, without ceremony, go to the houses of apothecaries, and have them called up at four or five o'clock in the morning, to administer some medicine, for a complaint he was subject to in his bowels ; which he would want to have made up for twopence ; if this was refused, he would go as far as fourpence ; but if it was to be sixpence he would go to another shop and make the same disturbance ; if he could get nothing for his groat, he would go to a druggist's and buy a pennyworth of jalap ; for he said he would sooner bear the pain in his guts all day,

than pay such a *great deal of money*, as *SIXPENCE* for *physic*.

At one time he rang up the domestics of a medical gentleman in Islington at four o'clock in a winter's morning. On the door being opened, to the question, "what is your pleasure?" he answered, "my business is *pain*, and my *pleasure* is to see your master." "Sir, my master has been out at a labour all night, very much fatigued, and not very well, and has not been in bed above half an hour." "Don't tell me about his labours and his being unwell; doctors must get up at all hours, well or ill. Tell him he must come down. I do not come as a pauper; I can afford to pay for my medicines." Away the servant went to tell his master; who sent his compliments to the gentleman, that he really was very poorly, but that his assistant, a regularly bred and skilful young gentleman, was then putting on his cloaths to wait on him, and would he was sure supply his place, to the satisfaction of the patient. "Then he may put off his cloaths again, and go to his bed; I will have no *assistant*; I will see none but the master; I have plenty of money in my pocket, and am willing to pay for what he means to prescribe for me." Down stairs the master came; but when he saw it was Cooke, whom he happened to know, although his servant did not, he wished himself in bed again. Cooke in his usual way, kept him three quarter's of an hour, giving a detail of symptoms and complaints, which could just as well have been given in three minutes. "Sir," answered the doctor, "from the very circumstantial account you have given of the symptoms, I understand what your disease is perfectly well, and I will make you up a small draught that shall relieve you in an instant."

Cooke. What will you charge me for it?

Doctor. Only eighteen-pence.

Cooke. Eighteen-pence! why sir, do you think I get my money on the highway by robbing people? I never heard of such extortion in my life! eighteen-pence! I thought you might have made me up something for two-pence!

Doctor. Sir, I am sorry to say, there are too many, who think, that because it is the duty of a medical man, to rise to all calls at unseasonable hours, they may wantonly, and without absolute necessity, or consideration of his fatigues in the day time, call him out of his bed whenever they please; but this is the first time I ever heard of a gentleman's being called up on a *two-penny* errand. As you must certainly mean to insult me, there is the door, sir.

Cooke. Well, sir, will you make me something for *four-pence*?

Doctor. No, nor four *shillings*, therefore go your ways, and be thankful that your years protect you from a kicking; and never come near my house again either by day or by night.

Soon after he went to live in White-lion street, he sent for a Mr. Pigeon, a surgeon, who lived on the opposite side of the street, to examine an ulcer on his leg, which gave him a little temporary alarm, he being of a very gross habit of body. After the gentleman had duly inspected it, Mr Cooke asked him if he could cure it. "Certainly, sir," replied the surgeon. "How long do you think it will be before you can make a perfect cure of it?" "A month." "And how much must I give you?" Mr. Pigeon, who saw that the sore was not of any great importance, answered "a guinea." "Very well," replied Cooke, "but mark this,—a guinea is an *immense sum of money*, and when I agree for sums of such magnitude, I go upon the system of NO CURE NO PAY; so if I am not cured at the expiration of the month, I pay you nothing." This was agreed to. After diligent attendance for several days, the wound was so near being healed, that Cooke expressed himself satisfied, and would not let Pigeon see it any more. However, within two or three days of the month being expired, the old fellow got some sort of plaster with *euphorbium* in it, from a farrier, and made a new ulcer on the place where the former had

been; and sending for Pigeon on the last day of the month shewed him that his leg was not well, and that of course the guinea he had agreed for was *forfeited!* This story the old fellow used to tell of himself with great satisfaction, and called it, "*plucking a pigeon.*"

The author of this memoir, once had the unwished for honour of being in this old gentleman's good graces; but, after being plagued with a few of his visits, finding it was too great a sacrifice of his time, to give up *a full hour* to hearing the history of his complaints, every time he chose to call on him, for the sake of receiving *two-pence a time* for the stuff, and a *penny for the galipot*, he hoped to get rid of him, by telling him, that his case was so totally complicated and difficult to be cured by medicine, that he gave up all hopes of effecting any good by that means, and that nothing but *matrimony* would cure him. This old driveller, who had never recollected that he had himself given the hint for this prescription, by asking at his first interview, whether *marriage* would cure his diseases, was quite delighted with this decision; and made frequent visits to his "dear friend," to know if he "could recommend him any rich widow," but this the prescriber always evaded, saying, in the words of Shakespeare,

*"Therein the patient
Must minister to himself."*

It would exceed the limits which we have prescribed to ourselves, were we to enumerate all the tricks which this gentleman used to play, in order to get gratuitous advice from medical practitioners; and the rebuffs which he used to receive for his mean arts: one or two however, we must not omit.

Doctor Lettsom is in the practice of giving audience at his own house to patients, at certain stated periods of the week; and seldom a week passed, during the space of *many years*, without the attendance of Mr. Cooke, *not in the character of the rest of the patients who*

usually applied for advice, but in that of a *pauper*. After availing himself for many years of the doctor's liberal disposition, in thus obtaining advice gratuitously, and scarcely ever going away from him, without requesting a draught of the doctor's "excellent table-beer, after his fatigue of coming from Pentonville," he opened his heart one day by a singular effort of generosity, and presented the butler with the sum of—*one shilling!* On these occasions of procuring medical advice, he was often intrusive and troublesome, by attempting to force his way to an immediate access to the doctor, in precedence of others who had been longer in waiting, and who of course had a right to admittance in succession. The butler once interfering, to prevent this rudeness of intrusion, Cooke, with no little heat of temper, upbraided him with his ingratitude; "why, you ungrateful rogue! did not I give you a shilling?" The servant very coolly answered, "yes, sir, I remember about nine months ago, you *did* give me a shilling; and here it is for you again," presenting it to him. Cooke, instantly becoming more placid, pocketed the shilling, observing, that it would be of use in buying something for him in his way home.

The prescriptions which he received from Dr. Lettsom, or from any other physician, he always carried to a druggist's, because he said he could get them made up cheaper than at an apothecary's; and would always ask what the medicine was to cost. If it were more than a shilling, he would ask whether he could not have *half* the quantity made up; but if there were two or three different formulæ in the paper, such as a box of pills, and a draught, he would have that which was to cost the least money; and say he would not have the other *just yet*.

Probably from some sense of shame, or to sanction his almost incessant applications to Dr. Lettsom, for medical advice, he intimated his resolution "in order to evince his gratitude," as he said, to make an ample donation to any public charity, which the doctor should

recommend. After this gentleman had taken pains to explain to him the objects of different charitable institutions, Mr. Cooke fixed upon the "Humane Society, for the recovery of the apparently dead," intimating at the same time, the amplitude of his fortune; and confirming it, by bringing a will in his pocket, which he submitted to the doctor's inspection. About three months before his decease, he confidentially assured Dr. Lettsom, that besides the ample provision he had made for his numerous relations, friends, and *his two maid servants*, and still more ample bequests to *alms-houses*, he was in possession of a surplus of *forty thousand pounds*, unappropriated; and desired the doctor to specify such hospitals and dispensaries, as he considered most in want of funds for their support, with an accurate account of the state of their finances, that this forty thousand pounds might be appropriated in proportion to their wants, and general utility. The worthy doctor immediately set about procuring the necessary information, which, after having obtained with no small pains and trouble, he sent to Mr. Cooke; but these objects of his profound munificence, were never noticed in the *real will*: and the disappointment could not but be felt by many of the friends of those public charities, to which his attention had been recommended, whose expectations were raised by fallacious promises never intended to be realized. Of all the institutions which the doctor had pointed out to him as deserving his support, the Humane Society alone was remembered; but the ample donation of *five hundred pounds*, set down in the will that he *showed* to Dr. Lettsom, turned out to be, in his *real will*, a paltry bequest of *fifty pounds*; and to the doctor himself, for the many years plague and trouble he had with him, a *plain gold ring*!

But although Mr. Cooke was so very desirous of obtaining gratuitous advice, and cheap physic for himself, he would not allow either of his females to be *sick or ailing*; or any medical or surgical relief to be *afforded them* when requiring it. His housekeeper,

Mrs. Strudwick, having a very bad ulcer on her leg, which disabled her from walking; she ventured to ask the advice of the author, what she had best do with it. Unfortunately, it was in the presence of her master, who d——d her, and swore there was nothing the matter with the old bitch, but laziness, and would not permit the leg even to be looked at; so that as the woman was very lame and in great pain, her medical friend was obliged to make his visits early in the morning, before Cooke's time of rising; or else in those hours, when it was known that the old gentleman was gone to the Bank, to buy in stock. How different was the conduct of Mr. Elwes towards his servants, when sick. Although his love of money was inordinate, he paid eighteen shillings a week for the maintenance and nursing of his maid servant when she had the small pox; but, indeed, Mr. Elwes was liberality itself, compared to Mr. Cooke.

After the death of Mr. Ramsbottom, of Goswell house, the gentleman whom Mr. Cooke used to employ in the constant altering of his wills, (and the *making* of others, when he wanted to gain some particular point,) the task was transferred to Mr. Jackson, of Bridgewater-square, whom Mr. Cooke had named one of his executors. To this gentleman he was an incessant torment; but, even from him, he took great care to keep one clause in his *real* will a secret; this was, the clause wherein he left Mr. Jackson only *one* hundred pounds, while each of his other executors were to have *two*. Mr. Jackson, however, by accident, got sight of this clause, and on his enquiring of Mr. Cooke the reason of this difference, the old man gave him the following answer. "Why, sir, you are some years older than any of my other executors; therefore it is probable that you will die before them; now, sir, it would be very wrong, that they, who would have to do the whole of the work after you were dead, should not have more than you, and therefore you must be content with *one* hundred pounds." "If that be your opinion,"

said Mr. Jackson, "strike my name out of your will entirely, for I will have nothing more to do with you." Mr. Cooke having thus lost this gentleman as his executor, after making enquiry for a fit person to place in his room, substituted the name of Mr. William Day, Oil-man, of No. 95, Gracechurch-street, in the next codicil.

Although the life of Mr. Cooke was not squared according to the strict rules of religion and morality, he was not yet altogether unmindful of his religious duties. He was, until within a very few years of his death, a constant attendant at divine service on Sundays, when the weather or his humour would permit; and seldom missed attending the Sacrament, either at church, or *at home*. How he conducted himself in the latter case, the following instance will illustrate.

Sacrament Sunday.

"What are you rummaging in that cupboard for, sir?" said Mrs. Strudwick, one Sunday morning. "Why I am going to take the Sacrament to-day," said Cooke. "I'm sure you stand in need of it," said the housekeeper, "for your sins are many; it is a fine day, and I am glad you are going to church; but if you are, it is time you should think of cleaning and dressing yourself. But what are you rummaging for?" "I want a bottle of wine that is in the cupboard." "Lord, sir, there is no bottle there, but one that must be nearly empty, as you have had it on tap this fortnight; surely you must have drank it all out by this time." "G-d d—n you, you b—h of hell, if it is drank out, it is you and the other wicked b—h in the kitchen, that must have drank it, not I."

Housekeeper. "Your mind is in fine trim truly, for taking the holy Sacrament; cursing and swearing as you do, is a good preparation. Well, here is the bottle you want—there is not above one glass of wine in it."

Cooke. "Very well, that one glass will do for me; bring me a small bit of bread, and my large prayer-book: I am not going to church, I shall administer the Sacrament to myself at home; I can do it just as well as any parson can do it for me; and you know Bet, it saves my pocket; as, if I went to church, it would be expensive, as I must put a shilling in the plate."

"Aye, you wicked old rogue" (said Bet) "it matters little whether you take the Sacrament at home or at church; for all the Sacraments in the world will never save your poor soul from going to the devil."

Some short time before his death, one of his executors observing to him, that he had omitted to remember his two servants in his will; the one (Mrs. Strudwick) who had faithfully served him as his housekeeper and nurse for upwards of ten years; the other, who used to lead him about the streets, and was also a good nurse to him during the time she had lived with him; he answered, "let them be paid their wages to the day of my death;—nothing more." On the gentleman's remonstrating on the very great injustice it would be, not to leave them something, all he could obtain, was twenty-five pounds for one, and ten pounds for the other. After the executor had taken his leave, Cooke went to his desk in which he had just before locked up the will, took it out, and ran his pen through the word *five*, writing T. C. in the margin, to shew it was not accidental.

But, were every anecdote of this most insatiable man, to be recorded, the recital of them would only disgust the reader, by an exposition of the miserable shifts which extreme avarice will drive a man to practise. For the sake of the reader therefore, it is time we bring our history to a conclusion.

In the year 1811, when he could no longer make his daily visits to the Bank, nor very conveniently see company at home, he took to his bed. A few select friends

were admitted, and some that were *not* select, occasionally found their way into his apartment; but, in his very weakest state, he knew how to send them off. Among others, a person for whom he always professed the highest friendship, used frequently to see him, at his own request; that friend was present, when one of those whom Cooke had long cajoled with the assurances of a handsome bequest, represented to him, that the sum of three hundred pounds would extricate him from all difficulties, and that he should be thankful for that sum, not as a gift, but as a loan; nor to be granted, unless he could shew his executors, that he should have ample means to repay it in less than a twelvemonth, with interest; so that the charitable funds which Mr. Cooke intended so largely to contribute to, should not suffer any loss. "My friend," said Mr. Cooke, "I am unwilling to part with my money." "The half, nay, one-fourth, of what you always promised I should have at your death, would extricate me from all my difficulties, and I would gladly forego the remainder." "I don't know you;" replied Cooke, "never promised you any thing; never saw you in my life; I tell you I am unwilling to part with my money, so let me die in peace." Just after this man had left him, Mr. Aldridge, the surgeon, entered his room; Mr. Cooke, had, while on his death-bed, sent for several medical men, in the hope of obtaining some relief from one or the other; but all knew him so well, that not one would attend; at last, Mr. Aldridge, who resided in White-lion street was persuaded to see him. Him, Mr. Cooke permitted to send some medicine.

At one of this gentleman's visits, the old man very earnestly intreated him to say candidly, how long he thought he might live. Mr. Aldridge answered, that perhaps he *might* last six days. Cooke, collecting as much of his exhausted strength as he could, raised himself in bed, and darting a look of the keenest indignation at the surgeon, exclaimed, "and are you not a dishonest man? a rogue! a robber! to serve me so?" "As Low sir?" asked Mr. Aldridge, with surprise.

"Why, sir, you are no better than a pickpocket, to go to rob me of my gold, by sending two draughts a-day to a man, that all your physic will not keep alive above six days! get out of my house, and never come near me again."

During the last days of his existence, he was extremely weak; and employed the few remaining hours in which he was sensible, in arranging matters with his executors, Messrs. Reynolds and Day; and departed this life, on the 26th day of August, 1811.

Some days before he took to his bed, he wanted to make a bargain with Mr. Bodkin, the undertaker, of Islington, for a cheap coffin for himself, but the money he offered not amounting to the common price of a parish coffin for paupers in the workhouse, the bargain was not concluded; his executors, however, gave him a more decent funeral than he would have been pleased with, had he been alive. The mob, who attended the procession from his house to Islington church-yard, did not treat his remains with any very great respect; nor did he go to his grave without the execrations of the multitude; some of the *fair sex* had provided themselves with rotten *cabbage-stalks* for the occasion, which they threw on the coffin when lowered into the grave, observing, that as he was so fond of *cabbage* in his life-time, he should have some to take with him to the other world.

Thus died and thus was interred, unpitied and unlamented, in the eighty-sixth year of his age, and possessed of a property of *one hundred and twenty-seven thousand, two hundred and five pounds, three per cent. consolidated Bank annuities*; a man, whose life was chequered with as few good actions, as ever fell to the share of any person who lived to so advanced an age.



It has indeed been said, that in all that long life, he never did so much as one good action. Thus it is, that

*"The evil that men do, lives after them,
The good, is oft interred with their bones."*

SHAKESPEARE.

but,

"So let it NOT be with Thomas!"

Happy to have it in our power to dedicate, even although we can do no more, *ONE little page*, to the enumeration of his *good deeds*, we with pleasure record,

1. That, for the last fourteen or fifteen years of his life, he gave one guinea a year to the charity school of Pentonville.

2. That being once induced by the intreaties of a well-meaning friend, to visit the apartment of a poor woman in his own neighbourhood, whose husband lay dead, herself in child-bed, and her children crying round her for want of food; he gave money for the purchase of a coffin for her husband, clothed the woman and her children, and gave a small sum for the supply of their immediate wants.

3. That in or about the years 1805 or 1806, when a report was current, of an intended invasion of this country by the French, and a subscription was raised in his parish for the supplying the privates of the Clerkenwell volunteer regiment with warm great coats, preparatory to their projected destination to winter quarters near the sea coast, Mr. Cooke opened his heart and generously gave a donation of twenty pounds!

4. To a club of gentlemen at the Chapel-house, (a little tavern in Pentonville,) where he sometimes went to take his half pint of porter, for the sake of reading the newspaper, he once gave a guinea, to drink his health on his birth-day!

These are all the instances that we have been able to collect; and these we record from the testimony of a person who was in the constant habit of being about his person daily for the last seventeen years of his life.

ABSTRACT

67

MR. COOKE'S WILL.

THIS is the last Will and Testament of me, Thomas Cooke, of White-lion Street, Pentonville, in the County of Middlesex, ESQUIRE; First, and principally, I recommend my soul to Almighty God, my Creator, who gave it; my body I desire may be buried under the Church of St. Mary Islington, by the side of Doctor Shirley, in a manner not expensive; and as to such worldly estate wherewith it has pleased God to bless me, I dispose thereof as follows: (that is to say,) After payment of all my just debts, funeral expences, and the charges of proving this my Will; I give and bequeath unto Mary Gillingham, whose maiden name was Neale, wife of Thomas Gillingham a custom-house officer, all my jewels, plate, linen, and household furniture of every description, in and about my dwelling-house and premises, at the time of my decease, and also my diamond ring, to and for her own sole use and benefit. I give and bequeath to Susanna Birch, wife of the late Joseph Birch, dec^d. all my wearing apparel of every description, to and for her own sole use and benefit.

I give and bequeath unto my godsons, Thomas Hammond, of Edmonton, in the Co. Middlesex, Surgeon; and Oliver Gammon, his cousin, the sum of thirty pounds each.

I give and bequeath unto the youngest daughter of Benjamin Hollingsworth, of No. 15, Watling Street, London, Stationer, the sum of £20 to be paid to her father, for her use; also unto the said Benj. Hollingsworth, the sum of £20. And I do hereby direct my executors to pay the four last-mentioned legacies in six months after my decease.

I give, &c. unto Samuel Leigh, of the three per cent. consolidated bank annuity office, and to his daughter Miss Leigh, the sum of £25 three per cent consols, each.

To Robert Overton, and Thomas Overton, brothers of Mary Clapton, wife of Thos. Clapton, of Goswell street, carpenter, £25 three per cent. consols, each; such last mentioned legacies to be transferred to the legatees, as soon as convenient after my decease. Unto all and every the children of James Cobon, of Letheringsett, near Holt, farmer, as shall be living at my decease, £25 three per cent. consols, each; to be transferred and paid to them, when they shall respectively arrive at the age of twenty-one years. And in case any or either of them shall happen to die, before they attain that age, the legacy or legacies of him, her, or them, so dying, shall fall into and constitute a part of my residuary estate.

I give to Hester and Hannah Provo, two orphans of the late Doctor Provo, of Barron street, Pentonville, Clerkenwell, the sum of £200 three per cent. consols, each; to be transferred and paid to them, when they shall respectively attain the age of twenty-one years, under the same restrictions as to their conduct, as my several residuary legatees are herein after subject to; but in case of the death of either, before the age of twenty-one, then the legacy of her or them so dying, shall fall into and constitute a part of the residue of my estate.

And I hereby direct my executors, to pay and apply the interest and dividends of the said last mentioned stock, for and towards the maintenance and education

of the said Hester and Hannah Provo until they shall attain the age of twenty-one years.

I give unto my executors herein after named, to Doctor Lettsom, of Camberwell grove; to Mr. Mendham of No. 38, Islington green; and to the before named Benjamin Hollingsworth; to John Hunt, of Leadenhall market, salesman; to William Love, of No. 1, Lamb's buildings, Bunhill row, hat-presser; to William Gough, of Egham hill, in the county of Surry, gentleman; to Mr. Starr, of Smithfield bars, apothecary; to Mrs. Poplington wife of Robert Poplington, of Distaff lane, London, butcher; to Mr. Grob, of College hill, London, sugar-baker, and to his eldest son; to the Reverend Mr. Crowder, of Ely place, Holborn; and to Mr. Hudson, of Islington green, gentleman; a plain gold ring, each.

I give to my exors., £1000 three per cent. consols, upon trust; to pay the interest or dividends thereof, to the before named Mary Gillingham, during her life, to and for her sole and separate use, and not to be subject to the debts, controul, or engagements, of her present or any future husband, and from and after her decease, to pay and apply the said interest towards the maintenance and education of any child or children of the said Mary G., that shall be living at the time of my decease, until he, she, or they, shall attain the age of twenty-one years; and to transfer and pay the capital to such ch. or chu. at the age of twenty one, in equal shares and proportions. And in case there shall be no ch. or chu. of the said M. G. living, at my decease, or, being such, all or any of them shall die, before they attain twenty-one yrs. as aforesaid, then the shares of such, so dying, shall fall into and constitute a part of the residue of my estate.

I give to my exors. the further sum of one thousand four hundred pounds, three per. cent. consols, in trust; to pay the interest and dividends thereof, to Mary Wood, of Foulsham, in Norfolk, widow; for and towards the support of herself, and the maintenance

and support of her son, Henry Wood, who is not in a state of mind to take the management of himself or his affairs. And in case the said Mary Wood die in the life time of the said Henry Wood, then the interest and dividends to be paid to the minister and churchwardens of the parish where the said Henry Wood resides, or to such other person or persons as shall have the care of him, the said H. W., with the approbation of my said exors.; to be applied to and for the benefit of the said H. W.

And after the death of Mary Wood and Henry Wood, the said £1400 3 p. C. *Consols*, shall fall into and become part of my residuary estate.

I give to my said exors., £1400 3 p. C. *Cons.* in trust; to pay the interest and dividends thereof to Susanna Birch, herein before named, for the use and maintenance of Thomas Birch her son, who is a cripple, during his life; and after his death, the capital shall fall into the residue.

To James Groves and Maria Groves of Wells, in Norfolk; to the three children, viz. two sons and one daughter, of Thomas and Elizabeth Hook, of Wells, in Norfolk, shipwright, £150 3 p. C; *Consols*, to be paid to them as they shall attain the age of twenty one years, respectively; but if any of them die before the age of 21, the legacy to fall into the residue.

To Phillippa the wife of James Clements, a labourer at Elmham, in Norfolk, one thousand pounds 3 p. Cent. *Consols*; in trust to the exors. to pay her the interest: not to be subject to the countrol of her present or future husband: after her decease the capital falls into the residue.

I give and bequeath to the wardens and commonalty of the mystery of Fishmongers of the city of London, and their successors, for the time being, FOR EVER, the sum of FIVE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED POUNDS, 3 p Cent. *Consols*. upon trust, to stand *possessed* thereof, and to pay and apply the interest

and dividends thereof, weekly and every week for ever, to, and for the benefit and relief, of the thirty-four parishionary alms-people, for the time being, living and residing in Jesus' Hospital, at Bray, in the county of Berks, by increasing the pensions and allowance of the said alms-people, in equal shares and proportions.

I give to the vicar, church-wardens, and overseers of the poor, of the parish of St. Leonard, Shoreditch, and their successors, for ever, the sum of *one thousand and fifty pounds*, 3 p. C. C.; to pay and divide the interest and dividends weekly for ever, between six poor widows or alms-people, who shall be inhabitants for the time being, of the six alms-houses situate at Hoxton, founded by Allen Badger, Esq. and commonly called Badger's Almshouses, equally, share and share alike; so long as they continue inhabitants of said almshouses.

To the said vicar, church-wardens, and overseers of the poor, of the said parish of St. Leonard, Shoreditch, and their successors, the further sum of TWO THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED Pounds, 3 per Cent. Cons. to pay and divide the interest and dividends weekly and for ever, between the 12 poor widows, for the time being in Fuller's Almshouses, Old Street Road. Provided always, that such bequests to the said Vicar, Church-wardens, and Overseers of the poor, are upon this express condition nevertheless; that all vacancies which shall happen in the said Almshouses, called Badger's Almshouses and Fuller's Almshouses, or either of them, after my death, shall from time to time and at all times be filled up by the vestry of the said parish of St. Leonard Shoreditch, for the time being, as often as such vacancy or vacancies shall happen. And I do hereby declare my will and meaning to be, that if at any time after my death, any vacancy which shall happen in the aforesaid almshouses or either of them, shall not be filled up in the manner I have above directed, and any Vicar or Church-warden, or Overseer of the poor, or any other person or persons, shall take upon themselves to nominate or appoint any

person or persons, to supply such vacancy in any of the said almshouses, in any other manner or form than as I have directed, then and in that case I declare my will and meaning to be, that such person or persons so appointed contrary to my aforesaid direction, shall not be entitled to receive any part or share of the annual, half-yearly, or other dividends, or produce of the said capital sums of one thousand and fifty pounds, and two thousand one hundred pounds, 3 per Cent. Cons. but that the share of the person or persons so unduly appointed, contrary to my aforesaid direction, shall be paid to the trustees or treasurer for the time being, of the charity schools of St. James, Clerkenwell, to be applied by them towards the support of the said schools, &c. &c.

To the Master, Wardens, and Court of Assistants, of the Frame-work-knitters, of the city of London, £2100, 3 per Cent. Cons. upon trust, to increase the weekly allowance to the alms people in the 12 almshouses founded by Thomas Bourne, Esq. in Kingsland Road, commonly called the Frame-work-knitters almshouses.

To the Bailiffs, Wardens, Assistants, and Commonalty of Weavers, £2100 upon trust, six months after my decease, for twelve alms people in the Weavers Alms-houses, Old Street Road, to increase the pay and weekly allowance of said alms people in equal proportion.

To the Trustees, Governors, Managers, or Directors, of the almshouses built or endowed by Balthazar Sanchez, a Spaniard, commonly called the Spaniards Almshouses, at Tottenham, £1400 3 per Cent. Cons. in trust, for the use of eight alms people residing in said almshouses.

To Reynardson's Almshouses, Tottenham, £1400 3 per Cent. Cons. for the use of eight almspeople, but if any person shall be placed in either of these almshouses not a parishioner of Tottenham, the share of

such person goes to the charity-schools of St. James, Clerkenwell.

To the Trustees, &c. of the almshouses founded by William Doughty, Esq. situate in the parish of St. George, Colegate, in the city of Norwich, **SIX THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED** pounds, 3 per Cent. Cons. in trust, six months after decease, for thirty alms people belonging to said Doughty's Almshouses. But the Master of the said almshouses for the time being to receive no benefit from the said dividends, it being understood that he receives a salary.

To the Trustees, Managers, &c. of the almshouses founded by Mr. Thomas Cooke, situate in Norwich aforesaid, £1750 3 per Cent. Cons. upon trust, six months after decease, for ten alms people in said almshouses, called Cooke's Almshouses.

To the Mayor and Burgesses of Kings Lynn, Co. Norfolk, £2300, 3 per Cents. in trust, six months after death, for twelve almswomen and the reader, for the time being, inhabitants of almshouses at St. James's End, in Lynn, aforesaid.

To the said Mayor, &c, in like manner, £2100 3 per Cent. Cons. for twelve almsmen in Framingham's otherwise Paradise Hospital, in Broad Street, Lynn.

Also £700, 3 per Cent Cons. in like manner, for four almspeople in Vallinger's Almshouses, South Lynn, All Saints.

To the Trustees, &c. of the almshouses founded by Sir William Woolaston and Edward Pouncefort, Esq. at Highgate, Co. Middlesex, £2100, six months after decease, on trust, for twelve almspeople in said houses.

To the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, £1000 3 per Cent. Cons. in aid of the fund of said Hospital.

To the Hospital or Infirmary lately founded in or near Norwich for the reception of blind persons, £1000, 3 per Cent. Consols.

I give and bequeath, at the desire and recommendation of my friend Doctor Lettsom, to the Governors

and Directors of the Society for the Recovery of persons apparently drowned, called the **HUMANE SOCIETY**, *Fifty Pounds* 3 per Cent. Consols!!! for the benefit of that institution*.

To the Mayor, Bailiffs, and commonalty of the city of Exeter, £1750, 3 per Cent. Cons. for the use of ten parishionary almspeople residing in Ten-cells Almshouses.

To the same, £700, 3 per Cent. Cons. for four almspeople in Palmer's Almshouses, in the said city of Exeter.

To the same, £2100, 3 per Cent, Cons. for eight men and their wives in Magdalen Almshouses, Exeter.

Provided always, and my will and intention is, that if any of the Governors, Trustees, or Managers of any of the charities to which I have given a legacy or legacies, shall decline to accept the same upon the conditions contained in this my will, then the legacy and interest shall be applied to, and constitute a part of, my residuary estate.

To Horace Love, son to William Love before named, £25, 3 per Cent. Cons. when he comes of age.

To each of the two sons of William Robinson, of Lynn, Blacksmith, £1400, 3 per Cent. Cons. if living at the time of my death, provided they live to the age of twenty-one years.

To each of the children of Dorothy Rogers, deceased, (late wife of William Rogers, of Norwich, carpenter) who shall be living at my decease, to be paid when they come of age, £1400, 3 per Cent. Cons.

To each of the children of the herein before named Mary Wood, (except her son, Henry Wood, herein before provided for) £1400, 3 per Cent. Cons. on their attaining twenty-one years.

To Elizabeth, Mary, Thomas and Hannah, four of the children of Hannah, wife of Simon Betts, of Hempnall, in Norfolk, labourer, if living, on coming of age £1400, Cons. each.

* He had always promised Dr. Lettison to leave to the Humane Society FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS.

- To each of the children of Susannah Birch, herein before named, (except her son Thomas Birch, a cripple, and herein before provided for) £1400, Cons. when they shall respectively attain twenty-one years.

To each of the children of Mrs Neale, the present wife of Collison Neal, of Worthing, in Norfolk, who shall be living at my decease, on coming of age, £1400 Consols.

To each of the children (on like proviso) of William Neal, brother of Collison Neal, £1400, Consols. Nevertheless, I do hereby declare, that * * * * *
* * * * * shall not be entitled to receive any benefit or interest under this my will, in consequence of her bad conduct.

The like sum of £1400, 3 per Cent. Cons. to each of the children of Maria Plumb; provisos as usual.

To each of the children (provisos as before, viz. if living at the time of decease, and on attaining the age of twenty one years) of William Collison, late apprentice to William Baldwin of Cromer in Norfolk £1400 Consols.

In case of the death of any of the last above mentioned legatees, the legacy of the deceased legatee to fall into the residuary estate.

All the rest, residue, and remainder, of my estate and property, whatsoever and wheresoever, and of what nature, kind, or quality, the same may be, and not disposed of before, by me, to be equally divided share and share alike, amongst all and every the legatees following; that is to say, the children of William Robinson; the children of Dorothy Rogers, deceased; the children of Mary Wood (except her son Henry); Hannah Betts, (except Thomas); of Collison Neal; of Maria Plumb; of William Collison; all of whom are my relations by blood, and herein before respectively named, or to such of them as shall be living at the time the youngest of them shall have attained the age of TWENTY ONE YEARS; and my will and mind is, and I do hereby direct, that the said residue together with the interest of the legacies given by this my will and not

otherwise directed to be disposed of, shall ACCUMULATE until the said youngest legatee shall attain the age of twenty-one years, for the benefit of such of the said legatees as shall be then living, and shall be transferred to them in equal shares and proportions, within six months after such youngest legatee shall attain his or her age of TWENTY-ONE YEARS; and I hereby will and direct that the *legacy duty* payable on the several legacies given by this my will, shall be paid and borne by my said executors out of my estate and effects, and shall not be charged or received from the legatees under this my will.

PROVIDED always, and my will is, that if either of my above mentioned residuary legatees shall MARRY before their respective legacies shall become due and payable under the directions contained in this my will, (except those who may be married at the time of my decease) or if any of them, whether male or female, shall be guilty of incontinence, from which any illegitimate issue shall be produced, then and in such case he, she, or they, so marrying or being guilty of incontinence as aforesaid, shall be wholly BARRED AND EXCLUDED FROM ALL BENEFIT AND ADVANTAGE UNDER THIS MY WILL; and then and in such case, the share or interest of such legatee or legatees who shall have been guilty of such *misconduct* and shall have thereby forfeited their legacies or interest under this my will, shall be added to and accumulate with the residue of my estate.

PROVIDED ALSO and to prevent, as much as possible, trouble to my executors, or expence to my estate, my will is, that when any or either of my said legatees, shall call on or apply to my executors for payment of any money under or by virtue of this my will, HE, SHE, OR THEY, SO APPLYING, SHALL AT THE SAME TIME, PRODUCE A CERTIFICATE OR CERTIFICATES signed by the minister and church-wardens of the parish or place where he she or they was or were baptized, certifying

his, her, or their baptisms, and such certificate or certificates, shall be accompanied by the affidavit or affidavits of such legatee or legatees, that he, she, or they, is or are the identical person or persons mentioned in this my will, and thereby entitled to receive such benefit for which he, she, or they, shall so apply.

AND I do also will and direct, that in case any or either of the legatees in this my will named, or their representatives, or any of them, shall sell, assign, transfer, or bargain, for the sale or transfer, of the respective legacies to them given by this my will, or any part of such legacies; then and in such case, and so often as the same shall happen, my will and mind is, that the legacy or legacies so given to such legatee or legatees who shall assign, transfer, &c. for the sale or transfer of their respective legacies, shall cease and become absolutely void.

AND I do further will and direct that all and every the legatees named in this my will, shall, on applying for the payment of their respective legacies, produce his or her affidavit stating that they have not assigned, transferred, or bargained, for the transfer of legacy or interest thereof, which he, she, or they, may have in this my will.

And it is my will and desire, that always when any dividend or dividends arising from any property shall have been received, (except such as shall be payable to the legatees under this my will) that then such dividends shall be immediately laid out in purchasing more stock in the 3 per Cent. Consols.

And it is my, &c. that any property I may be possessed of and not disposed of by this my will, may with all convenient speed be turned into money by my executors, and be invested in the 3 per Cent. Consols.

AND I beg that an eight quire folio foolscap paper book may be purchased, and a regular account always kept of debtor and creditor, and which book shall be kept in such place as my executors shall mutually agree on, so that each of them may have free access thereto.

AND I request that my executors six months before the trusts of this my will shall expire, will write and send or cause to be written and sent to my respective residuary legatees a proper notice, informing them when they are to apply for and receive their respective shares of my residuary estate. And I do hereby empower my executors out of the monies which shall come to their hand by virtue of this my will, to reimburse themselves for all such costs, charges, and expences as they shall be put to, in the execution of the trusts reposed in them.

I NOMINATE, constitute, and appoint, Thomas Johnston*, of No. 10, Upper Thames-street, in the City of London, coal merchant; William Day, of No. 95, Gracechurch-street, in the said C. L. oil man; and William Reynolds, of St. John's-street, Clerkenwell, Co. Middlesex, corn-chandler; ~~Executors~~ of this my Will. And I do hereby direct, that my said trustees, or any or either of them, shall not be answerable or accountable for any loss which might happen of any of the said monies, unless the same shall happen through his or their wilful defaults or neglects, and that the one of them shall not be answerable for the acts, receipts, defaults, or neglects, of the other, &c.

PROVIDED ALSO, that if either of my executors shall happen to die, or refuse, or decline, to act, in the execution of this my will, before the trusts hereof are fully executed, the survivor or survivors may elect a trustee, or may appoint some other fit person or persons (their own son or sons excepted) to be a trustee or trustees in the room of the trustee dying or declining to act; but the age of such new trustee shall not be under thirty, nor exceed forty years; and then and in that case, the residue, &c. shall by such surviving trustees be transferred into the joint names of themselves and the

* The appointment of Mr. Johnston is revoked by the third Codicil, and Mr. Burgess is thereby appointed in his room.

new trustee, &c. so that there may be continually **THREE TRUSTEES** of this my will.

I give to each of my executors, T. J., W. D., and W. R., the sum of £200, to be received and taken by them immediately after my decease, and the further sum of £100 each, to be received and taken by them when the trusts of this my will shall expire and be fully performed, as a small acknowledgement for the trouble they may have in the execution of the trusts hereby reposed in them.

The like sum of £200 and £100 to each person who shall be appointed by my trustees, or the survivor or survivors, &c.

AND WHEREAS I may find out some person or persons whose names I have omitted mentioning in this my will, and to whom I may wish to give something, now I do hereby direct my executors to pay any legacy or legacies to any person or persons who may be mentioned in any letter or paper in my own hand-writing, which may be annexed to or found with this my Will: And I do hereby declare that every such letter or paper is to be considered as a Codicil to this my Will and Testament, and be deemed and taken as a part thereof. In witness whereof, I have to this my last Will and Testament contained in forty-two sheets of paper and affixed together, set my hand and seal, that is to say, my hand to the forty-one preceding sheets, and my hand and seal to this forty-second and last sheet of paper, this twenty-eighth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ten.

THOMAS COOKE.

L.S.

Signed, sealed, published, and declared, by the said
: Thomas Cooke the testator, as and for his last Will
and Testament, in the presence of us, who in his

presence, and at his request and in the presence of each other have subscribed our names as witnesses thereto.

SAMUEL SEWELL,
No. 12, *St. John's-street, Clerkenwell.*
JOSEPH WINDSOR,
No. 12, *St. John's Lane, Clerkenwell.*

Codicil first states, that whereas since the date and execution of his Will, Mr. Cooke has been apprized that it is the intention of some malicious persons or persons, (under a supposition of being related to him,) to endeavour to set aside his said last Will and Testament, bearing date March 28, 1810; in order therefore to make that his last Will, if possible, still more binding, he, by the present codicil, ratifies and confirms the same, and every article, clause, matter, and thing, therein contained, to all intents and purposes. Dated June 18th, 1810, and witnessed by

SAMUEL SEWELL.
JAMES BANISTER, 85, *Cow-cross.*

Codicil second, bearing date January 24, 1811, gives and bequeaths to the Mayor, Burgesses, and Commonalty, of the town of Reading, Berkshire, in trust, the following legacies to almshouses in that town.

£1400, 3 per Cent. *Consols*, to eight men and women, for ever, inhabitants for the time being, of the almshouses in St. Mary Butts, Reading, founded by John Leach, otherwise John A. Larder.

£875, *Consols*, to four almsmen and one almswomen of Kendrick's almshouses in *Silver-street*.

£1050, *Consols*, to six almsmen, of Sir Thomas Vachell's Almshouses, on the south side of Castle-street, near Pinkney-lane.

£875, *Consols*, to five poor single almswomen of the almshouse in Chain-lane, founded by Mr. John Hall, deceased.

£1400, *Consols*, to eight almswomen of almshouses in Southampton-street, Reading, founded by Mr. Bernard Harrison.

£700, *Consols*, to four almswomen of Webb's almshouses, in the Butts, Reading.

To each and every of the children of James Cobon, of Lethersett, near Holt, £25, 3 per cents, in addition to what he had before bequeathed them by his Will.

To Robert Overton, and Thomas Overton, £25, *Consols*, in addition to what he bequeathed by his Will; and he by this second Codicil, contained in five sheets of paper, confirms his Will of the 28th March, 1810.

(Signed) THOMAS COOKE.

L. S.

Witnessed by SAMUEL SEWELL, 12, *St. John's-lane*, and ISAAC ISLES, 119, *St. John's-street, Clerkenwell*.

Codicil third, revokes and makes void the appointment of Thomas Johnston, as one of his executors, and nominates William Hugh Burgess, of Birchin-lane, in the City of London; banker, to be an executor and trustee of his will in the room of the said Thomas Johnston; adding, "And I do hereby give and bequeath unto my housekeeper Elizabeth Strudwick, the sum of twenty-five * pounds; and to my servant, Mary Lovel, the sum of ten pounds, to be paid to them as soon as conveniently may be after my decease. And I do desire that this may be considered and taken as part of my said Will, and do declare the same to be a

* As soon as the executor left the room Cooke struck out the word five, and wrote his initials T. C. opposite the erasure in the margin.

third Codicil. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand, this eighth day of April, 1911."

THOMAS COOKE.

L.S.

Witness, (the word *five* in the seventeenth line of the above Codicil having been first *struck through with a pen*,)

SAMUEL SEWELL,
12, St. John's-lane, Clerkenwell.
HUMPHRY READ,
No. 7, Foster-lane, Cheapside.

DISCONTENTS having been expressed by those relatives and residuary legatees, to whom bequests were left, but with the restriction that they were not to receive or enjoy the benefit of any part of such bequests until the youngest of their children, living at the time of Cooke's death, should arrive at the age of twenty one years; (and the youngest child living, being at this time only four years old,) the solicitors employed by the executors advised the filing of an amicable bill in chancery, not only in the hope that the chancellor would do that which the executors could not do, namely, effect the removal of the restrictions altogether; but also to guard the executors against actions that might be expected from some of the residuary legatees, if they should pay any legacies contrary to the restrictions; which in certain cases they might be liable to do, from their peculiar nature. The bill had also another object in view; namely, to get rid of the numberless claims that were set up by various persons who had received

promises of legacies, for their *civilities*, and for their *property*, expended on Mr. Cooke for many years; as also to set aside the pretensions of certain persons, who had attempted to set up a pretended codicil, bearing date three days before Mr. Cooke's death; but which nobody before knew of but some of the parties concerned, and to which the semblance of Mr. Cooke's signature was annexed, but no names of any witnesses. A decree was issued soon after Mr. Cooke's death, by advice of counsel, against those persons who were to be benefited by this pretended codicil.

*Synoptical View of the foregoing Will and
Codicils of Mr. Thomas Cooke.*



	£.
TO Thomas Hammond, surgeon of Edmonton	30
Oliver Gaminon	50
Benjamin Holingsworth	20
Ditto, for his youngest daughter	20

*All the legacies that follow are in the Three per Cent.
Consols.*

Samuel Leigh	25
Miss Leigh	25
Robert Overton	25
Thomas Overton	25
Hester Provo, when 21	200
Hannah Provo, ditto	200
Mary Gillingham, his jewels, plate, linen furniture, and his diamond ring, and the interest or dividends of	1000
Mary Wood, of Foulsham	1400
Susannah Birch, (and also his wearing apparel &c)	1400
James Groves	150
Maria Groves	150
Three children of T. and E. Hook, £150 each	450
Phillippa, Clements, at Elmham	1000
Fishmonger's Almshouses, Bray, Berks ..	5900
Badger's ditto, Hoxton	1050
Fuller's ditto, Old-street road	2100
Framework-knitters ditto, Kingsland-road	2100
Weaver's ditto, Old street road	2100

	£.
To Spaniards almshouses, Tottenham	1400
Reynardson's ditto, Tottenham	1400
Doughty's ditto, Norwich	6600
Cooke's ditto, Norwich	1750
St. James's End ditto, Lynn, Norfolk ..	2300
Framingham, or Paradise Hospital, Lynn	2100
Vallinger's Almshouses, South Lynn	700
Woollaston & Pouncefort's ditto, Highgate	2100
Norfolk and Norwich Hospital	1000
Hospital for the blind, Norwich	1000
Royal Humane Society, London	50
Ten-cells Almshouses, Exeter	1750
Palmer's ditto, do	700
Magdalen ditto, do	2100
Horace Love, when of age	25
Two sons of William Robinson, £1400 each	2800
Four children of Hannah Betts, £1400 ..	5600
St. Mary Butts Almshouses, Reading ..	1400
Kendrick's ditto, do	875
Vachell's ditto, do	1050
Chain-lane ditto, do	875
Harrison's ditto, do	1400
Butt's ditto, do	700
Children of Dorothy Rogers each	1400
Mary Wood, (except Henry	
Wood, already provided for) each	1400
Children of Susannah Birch, each	1400
Mrs. Neal, each	1400
William Neale, (excepting	
* * * * *) each	1400
Maria Plumb, each	1400
William Collison, each	1400

Residuary Legatees:—

William Robinson's	Hannah Betts.
children.	Collison Neale.
Dorothy Rogers.	Onoria Plumb.
Mary Wood.	William Collison.

No legacies to the relations to be paid until the youngest legatee attains 21 years.

Bars to the legacies :—

Marrying!
Incontinence.

	£.
William Hugh Burgess, <i>Executor</i>	300
William Reynolds, do	300
William Day, do	300
The children of James Cobon, in addition, each	25
Robert Overton	25
Thomas Overton	25
Elizabeth Strudwick	20
Mary Lovell	10

To each of the fourteen undermentioned Persons, a plain Gold Ring.

Dr. Lettsom
Mr. Mendham, 38, Islington-green
John Hunt, Leadenhall-market
William Love
William Gough, Egham-hill
Mr. Starr, Smithfield-bars
Mrs. Poplington
Mr. Grobb, College-hill
Mr. Grobb, jun.
Rev. Mr. Crowder
Mr. Hudson, Islington-green
Mr. Burgess
Mr. William Day
Mr. Reynolds

THE END

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Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, London; Fellow of the London Medical Society; one of the Institutors of, and Secretary to, the Society for Relief of Widows and Orphans of Medical Men in London and its Vicinity, &c. &c. &c.

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Lettsom,
Murray,
Myers,

Drs Sims,
Squire,
George Rces,
Thornton,
Underwood,

Drs. Woodville,
Willan,
D. Dundas, Esq.
E. Ford, Esq.
&c.

Character of this Work from the Reviewers.

"In these times, when we see sumptuous edifices erecting by persons vending empirical medicines, and when we are willing to allow much excuse for the disappointed patient, who, after trying all the various regular means for the removal of worms, has recourse to any quack who will promise relief, we hail, with pleasure, the promulgation of a remedy to cure this plague of human kind: a remedy that is perfectly innocent to the constitution, and efficacious in its proposed object. Nor can we forbear properly to appreciate the very modest character of its promoter, his correctness in the detail, and his disinterestedness in thus freely publishing the particulars of so desirable and so sovereign a remedy. Mr. Chamberlaine candidly relates in this book, not only all the experiments made with Cowhage in the cure of Worms, but enumerates all the various remedies hitherto employed, and compares their effects, which certainly evince the superior efficacy of the *Dolichos Pruriens*; it is an important acquisition to the *Materia Medica*, and the College has accordingly adopted it in the last edition of their *Pharmacopœia*; and it is highly worthy the attention of practitioners, as it does not possess the deleterious properties of some vermifuge medicines, nor the rough and ungrateful flavour, and indeed, ill consequences, of others, and yet is more certainly effectual than any. The pamphlet is modestly and clearly written, and contains a number of cases sanctioned by many most respectable physicians."

European Magazine for August, 1812.

"Whoever contributes to the diminution of human misery, is deservedly reckoned among the benefactors of mankind. The promulgation made by the author, of the efficacy of the *Dolichos pruriens*, in

Books by the same Author

removing one of the common, and often most dangerous, diseases, especially of infancy and poverty, appears to be a well-established fact. The very respectable attestations of this Simple, from medical men of the first eminence, stamps confidence on the Cowhage, or Cowitch, in verminous complaints. We very earnestly recommend the use of this medicine, so innocent, so easily taken, and apparently so efficacious, and we cordially thank Mr. Chamberlaine for making it thus universally known, and not concealing it as a nostrum."

Eclectic Review for May, 1805, page 360.

"This is a small tract, but of sufficient importance in society to deserve notice. The health of an interesting portion of every generation is concerned in the well understanding and judicious treatment of this disease, so common to children. We have, besides, lately heard of the fatal effects of a worm medicine, too generally and too indiscriminately given. ***** Calomel, and other preparations of Mercury, are generally had recourse to; and such powerful medicines more frequently do harm than good.

"In describing the symptoms of worms, Mr. C. deserves to be well attended to; for, as there is no pathognomic sign of them, (seeing them, or parts of them, is alone a certainty) those diagnostics most strongly denoting their presence must be attended to. In fact, there is not a symptom, indicative of worms, which may not be experienced in other disorders; and thus, the writer, with proper candour, acknowledges his self.

"Under this uncertainty then, what can we do better, than prescribe that vermifuge medicine which, if our conjectures are right, will remove the disease; and, if we are not mistaken, will neither aggravate the ill, nor expose the sufferer to new maladies and dangers. Under this view of the case, we can safely refer the afflicted, or their friends, to the perusal of the work before us, and the anthelmintic course it points out."

Universal Magazine for May, 1805, page 447.

"The present edition of this useful publication contains a more ample description of intestinal worms, with their symptoms and causes, than was given in the former impressions. The author's high opinion on the efficacy of the Stizobonium in the removal of worms, is confirmed by the testimonials of various respectable practitioners. He appears to be candid and judicious; and it is fair to him to add, that he prefers a selection from the very numerous cases which have been communicated to him, displaying the good effects derived from Cowhage within the last twenty years, to any thing like indiscriminate publication."

Monthly Review for June, 1805, page 220.

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